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# NESTORIAN BIOGRAPHY :

BEING

## SKETCHES OF PIOUS NESTORIANS

WHO HAVE DIED AT

OROOMIAH, PERSIA.

BY

MISSIONARIES OF THE A. B. C. F. M.

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

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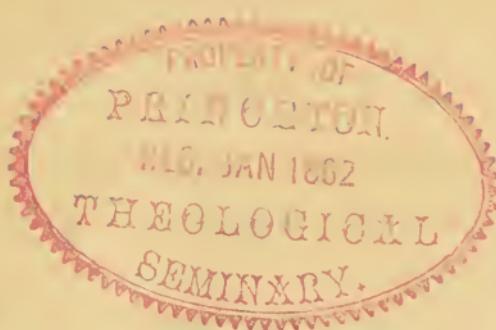
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A L L E N A N D F A R N H A M, P R I N T E R S.



## P R E F A C E .

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"Full many a gem of purest ray serene,  
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

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THE sentiment of this familiar stanza is often and mournfully verified, under the eye of the Christian missionary. If *waste* could properly be predicated of the divine economy, in any part of God's providential government of this world, it might be in the *wrecks of mind*, that lavishly moulder amid the moral ruins which so sorrowfully overspread benighted lands.

But, if it be the missionary's peculiar lot to survey and deplore the wastes of the intellectual and moral deserts of our fallen race, it is also his privileged boon to see those deserts occasionally smile, with here and there a "rose of Sharon" and "lily of the valley,"—with flowers that blos-

som for the celestial paradise, and gems that are to sparkle forever in the Saviour's crown. And the task is as proper for him as it must be grateful, to gather up and preserve the memories of some such fragrant flowers and shining gems, which, by the grace of God, he is permitted to be the instrument of rearing in the dreary wilderness, and culling from the dark and rugged mines of the missionary field.

This little volume would aspire to serve the purpose of a humble casket, to bear a few such missionary flowers and gems to the knowledge and contemplation of the friends of missions at home, and thus contribute its mite to the glory of God, and the advancement of that sacred cause to which its authors are devoted. As its title imports, it is made up of a brief record of a number of pious Nestorians, of both sexes, who have died during the past few years;— trophies of divine grace, from this ancient but now fallen church, and the earnest, as we trust, of renewed multitudes of this dear people, who shall hereafter die in the faith of the gospel, and share in a glorious immortality.

These sketches will of course speak for themselves. We cannot, however, refrain from the single remark, by way of anticipation, that, while witnessing the simple belief,—the prayerful and

watchful lives,— and the humble yet strong and triumphant confidence, and the calm joy in a present Saviour, when crossing the dark valley, exemplified in some of these cases, though accompanied perhaps by weaknesses that always cling more or less inveterately to the characters of the first generation of converts emerging from the deep darkness of a benighted land, we have felt constrained certainly not less to admire the grace of God, manifested in the childlike artlessness of their faith and the sincerity and ardor of their love, than in the less emotional and more cool, speculative, calculating, (and, must we not add, more sophisticated ?) views and feelings, though based on a more firmly established morality,— the general growth of centuries,— that characterize much of the piety of Protestant Christendom.

As the characters of the individuals here described were of unequal interest, so the sketches of them will of course be marked by a corresponding variety. For convenience of arrangement, or rather as no other circumstance seemed more naturally to suggest the order, the Sketches follow each other according to the date of the death of each subject. Notices of some of the individuals here described have been published in the periodicals of the American Board of Commissioners for

Foreign Missions, but only a part of them; and of none, in so full a form.

The drawings which accompany the volume do not profess to be *precise likenesses* of the individuals whom they respectively represent; nor are they mere fancy sketches. They were taken for this work by a Persian artist from persons of about the same age, and similar size, form, and features with those of the departed, as recollected by intimate living friends; and they thus give a good idea of their general appearance, and an accurate representation of the various costumes common among the Nestorians.

We need hardly bespeak the leniency of the Christian critic on the productions of the missionary's pen during the few moments which he is able to snatch for such an object from his more arduous and exhausting labors. Trusting that our little volume will be received in the spirit in which it is sent forth,—a sincere desire and fervent prayer that it may do good, and honor our common Saviour,—we thus confidently bid it God speed.

OROOMIAH, Persia, }  
October, 1856. }

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PRIEST YOHANNAN.





## PRIEST YOHANNAN.

BY REV. JUSTIN PERKINS, D. D.

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It was in the early part of 1836, soon after we commenced our male Seminary at Oroomiah, that, needing the services of priest Abraham, the teacher, to assist me in the preparation of the school cards for the pupils, I was introduced by him to priest Yohannan, as the best-qualified ecclesiastic then known, to succeed him as teacher in the infant Nestorian Seminary. As matter of wonder, it was asserted of him, that, among other qualifications, he could not only *read* the ancient Syriac, but was also able to translate it into the modern language,—a thing which few indeed of the Nestorian ecclesiastics could then do.

In priest Yohannan, who was seated before me, I beheld a ragged, cross-eyed cripple, apparently about thirty years old. His bloodshot, defective lumina-

ries, and haggard features, as well as general report, proclaimed him a violator of the Scripture injunction—"not given to much wine." Under this unpromising exterior there was still, however, something interesting in his appearance; a head which phrenologists would have pronounced one of the first order; much evident native vigor of mind, and an amount of general intelligence, acquired during his early rambles, which was quite rare at that time among the Nestorians, few of whom then wandered far from home. He had been to Tiflis, and other parts of Georgia, as a beggar in the name of an ancient and venerated church. His intelligence thus acquired, like that of others of his people, was, almost as matter of course, somewhat at the expense of his standard of morals, compared with the more simple manners and unsophisticated ideas of the untravelled Nestorians. As to his rags, they were not peculiar, even among the ecclesiastics of so poor a people, especially at that day, when a decent garment on the back of a Nestorian could be safe from the hands of their rapacious Mussulman oppressors, only by an outer covering of rags to conceal it. In regard to his intemperance, that, too, was but too common among the priesthood, to disqualify him, in the general estimation, for being a teacher. And the principles of our mission on the subject being

made known, his bishop, Mar Yohannan, stood ready to place him under bond of sobriety, on penalty of flagellation, if violated, — which in their then rude state was quite in harmony with their views of the proper mode of ecclesiastical administration, and entirely satisfactory to both parties, however little so to the missionary.

With his immoral habits, priest Yohannan was still represented to me as one of the most *religious* men among his people, that is, one of the strictest in the observance of their dead, empty forms, and probably all the stricter, from a consciousness of his guilty practices, in the hope thus to atone for them. The church of his village, Cousee, was also the depository of a *New Testament*, written on parchment, reputed to be between fourteen and fifteen hundred years old, and esteemed so sacred, that even *mussulmâns* were afraid to swear falsely over it. It was deemed incumbent on a priest of such a hallowed charge to be a model of sanctity in the observances of his church; and priest Yohannan came fully up to that standard, declaring when sick, for instance, that he would sooner die than take chicken soup, prescribed by Doctor Grant, on Wednesday or Friday.

Such was priest Yohannan, when introduced as the teacher of the male Seminary at Oroomiah.

But from that time onward, his course was such as in general to give us great satisfaction till the day of his death. He was diligent and faithful in his work, and very eager, industrious, and successful in his efforts to acquire knowledge and improve in personal character; and his dependence on forms gradually vanished as light broke into his mind, and was succeeded by evangelical belief, and, we trust, by saving conversion.

It is not my purpose to attempt a minute account of priest Yohannan's labors or his progress. It must suffice, that I introduce into this sketch a few notices of him as recorded in my journal, in those early years of our mission, with some explanatory remarks.

I have stated that priest Yohannan was very eager for the acquisition of knowledge. This will appear from his efforts to acquire the Hebrew language. Under date of December 12, 1836, a few months after he entered the employment of the mission, I find the following record: "Priest Yohannan, the teacher of our Seminary, requested permission to spend his evenings in studying Hebrew with priest Dunka. I could not refuse him the privilege, as he labors hard in the school during the day, and I hope he may also be aided, by this exercise, to a better understanding of the Scriptures." Priest Yo-

hannan was very successful in the study of Hebrew, which so much resembles the ancient and modern Syriac, that it is easily acquired by Nestorians. And the knowledge which he obtained of that venerable language, was, as I anticipated, very beneficial to him, both as a teacher and a preacher.

In the early years of our mission, we were much straitened for comfortable quarters, both for our families and our native helpers. Several of the latter were obliged to live in the same room, and occasionally to lodge guests from a distance. In that relation, priest Yohannan, a modest man and a defenceless cripple, as is too often the case in such circumstances, frequently suffered not a little from the jeers of his overbearing ecclesiastical superiors; though when they would meet him on the more clerical arena of argument and scriptural discussion, he would soon worst them; and with their rude characters and habits, at that time, his acknowledged intellectual superiority only increased the general discomfit of his relation to his reverend room-mates. Under date of March 19, 1836, I find this record:— “Priest Zadoc, a brother of Mar Shimon, the Nestorian patriarch, is with us on a visit. He is rather intelligent for a rude mountaineer—quite shrewd, very tall, and a remarkably fine looking man. Last evening, the high ecclesiastics in our families, the

bishops, and this priest, Zadoe, lowered down their clerical dignity so far as to engage in the sport of wrestling. Priest Yohannan, the teacher of our school, who lodges in the same apartment, was asleep at the time, and the ecclesiastical wrestlers, in their dexterous feats, fell upon him and had well-nigh crushed him. He has been scarcely able to instruct the school to-day, and says that he verily thought that our house was falling by the shock of an earthquake, when the mammoth priest Zadoc came down upon him. These ecclesiastics are exceedingly ashamed, and would gladly have concealed the matter; but priest Yohannan was so much injured as to require medical attention, and thus the whole affair was revealed."

When at length a small room was in process of erection for priest Yohannan and one or two more quiet companions, among whom was good Mar Elias, whose character was more congenial with his own quiet spirit and modest bearing, the writer one day observed him (though unnoticed by the priest) surveying the partially finished walls with such delight, in anticipation of a peaceful lodging there, that, lame as he was, he leaped in ecstasy several times around the room. I now think of that humble room with tender and sacred satisfaction, as probably the gate of heaven to priest Yohannan and some of his companions!

The same lack of room consigned our Seminary to a large cellar, which was also used as a chapel during the first year and a half of our residence at Oroomiah. It was tolerably well lighted from one side of the basement; and the ceiling being arched with burnt brick, and the whole plastered with gypsum, it was a comfortable room for those purposes, except during the summer, when, from the difficulty of ventilating it, it was almost intolerably hot for the daily occupation of forty pupils. "We have been *stewed* all day," in a common phraseology of Persia, was the frequent report of priest Yohannan, till we succeeded in providing a large room above-ground.

While the Seminary was in the cellar, my study was nearly over it, in a second story of our dwelling. From that, I strung a wire down through the several mud and brick ceilings, and attached it to a small bell in the school-room, by which I could announce the hours of the day, and in some measure regulate the exercises of the school, without always leaving my work for that purpose. To keep the school *still*, was a far more difficult problem than to regulate the time, whether I was in my study, or present in the school-room. It is a part of the system of an oriental school, (if system it have,) for

the pupils all to study aloud at the same time; and in an assembly of forty, the chorus was very apt to rise in proportion to the number of confused voices, and the magnetizing effect of the mutual excitement, till it reached a very high key. As I used to sit in my study, preparing school cards for the daily use of the Seminary, (no printed books yet existing in the language,) I endeavored to impose as much restraint as possible on this system, by the use of the same little bell. A single smart shake was the signal for *silence* in the school. As soon as given, amid the roar of scores of mingled voices that came rumbling up through the brick and earth walls and ceilings, the shrill voice of priest Yohannan, on his highest note, was heard, “SOFTLY, BOYS, SOFTLY, SOFTLY.” Then ensued a sudden hush; but ere long the low rumble is again heard, gradually waxing louder and louder, till another stroke from the bell, and the quick echo of priest Yohannan’s voice, produced another temporary calm. This reminiscence vividly suggests to me, how great is the contrast between the rude, untutored state of our first school, of that early period of our mission, and our well-regulated Seminaries of the present time. Yet in the circumstances, it were hardly possible to conceive an object of deeper interest than was that

infant Seminary, at its commencement, in the heart of benighted Asia; nor did it fail to yield precious fruit, in those early years of its history.

Priest Yohannan possessed a very kind, generous, and social heart. As is the case with many of our Nestorian helpers, nothing earthly seemed to afford him so much gratification as to have us visit him at his own home. I find recorded in my journal, under date of November 11, 1836, one such visit, made by the writer and his family, in company with Doctor and Mrs. Grant.

“ We rode two fursaks, to Cowsee, the village of priest Yohannan, the principal of our Seminary. The priest and his people received and entertained us with great cordiality. Priest Yohannan is poor, but he was extremely gratified with our visit, for which he had long importuned us. Notwithstanding our strong remonstrance, he abandoned his best room, and in fact the only one, for our accommodation, while he and his numerous household sought lodgings elsewhere, as they could find them. And about daybreak, the next morning, the joyful tidings were announced to us, that the principal lady of the house — the wife of the priest’s elder brother — had become the mother of a fine son, in the course of the night, in the *stable*! It was in a *stable*; but our adorable Lord was also born in a stable. We

judge of things by comparison. Miserable as are the *stables* in Asia, the choice between lodging in them and in the ‘inns’ is very inconsiderable.”

How does memory teem with affecting recollections, as the writer copies this record! The dear missionary companions, Doctor and Mrs. Grant, who were with him and his partner, on that visit, have long since gone to their rest and reward; their generous host, the subject of this sketch, soon followed them. The father of the infant son, whose birth in the stable dated from their visit, is also in his grave. That infant son, now a young man in his nineteenth year, is a promising member of our Seminary on Mount Seir. The infant son of the writer, who was with his parents on that visit, died at the age of nearly four years, one of the six of their seven children who have successively gone to the spirit land; and the infant son of Doctor Grant, also with his parents at that time, is in far-off America, aspiring and preparing to become a missionary, like his devoted, heroic father.

Priest Yohannan, during the first year or two of his connection with our mission, boarded at the writer’s table; and it was delightful, in that relation, to witness, from day to day, the activity of his mind — his eager grasping after knowledge, especially after religious knowledge. He was already

comparatively familiar with the letter of some portions of the Holy Scriptures when he entered our service, having long been employed in teaching a few children, in different places, to read the Nestorian Liturgy. His religious views and feelings were, however, for some time, during the early part of his connection with us, much more *legal* than evangelical, (aside from his attachment to dead forms,) partaking largely of the common idea, in the oriental churches, of *purchasing salvation* by good works, rather than accepting it as a free gift of sovereign grace. One day, at the table, as he was expatiating on the *merits of the missionary*, in his self-sacrifice and self-denials, and the latter peremptorily disclaimed all idea of thus purchasing salvation, asserting the real ground of a good hope as wholly of free grace through the blood of Christ, priest Yohannan in reply adroitly turned to him, and with a look of deep and earnest solemnity which I can never forget, interrogated, "*Did not our Lord Jesus Christ himself say, 'whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward?'*"

Priest Yohannan's views, however, gradually underwent a radical change on the momentous subject of salvation by grace, and with his progress in scrip-

tural and evangelical knowledge he at length commenced proclaiming the truth on that subject, in public and in private, in the church and from house to house, at first probably as matter of only theoretical belief, but in due time, as matter of deep, personal experience, and with thrilling unction.

Priest Yohannan was at once an eloquent and effective preacher. In a notice of him in the writer's journal, under date of January 4, 1840, is the following record: "Attended prayers at the church [in Ardishai]. After returning to my lodgings, in the bishop's stable, not only the *meâna*, [elevated portion, occupied by guests,] but much of the great stable itself, was soon filled with the villagers, evidently eager to hear the Word of God, though no call or notice of a meeting had been given. At my suggestion, the bishop directed priest Yohannan to read to the assembly. There were at least a hundred and fifty present, crowded shoulder to shoulder. The audience listened with fixed attention more than an hour, and without the least symptom of impatience, though huddled so closely together, and many of them standing among the buffaloes and oxen in the stable. I am more and more impressed with priest Yohannan's uncommon powers as a popular native preacher. His figures are often very striking. Some of them might, indeed, ap-

pear puerile to an American, but to the simple-hearted Nestorians, they are very vivid and impressive. As a specimen, in explaining the nature and importance of *humility*, as inculcated in James 1: 9, 'Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted,' etc., 'have you not seen the stars,' he inquired, 'and observed *how high* God has placed them in the heavens?' Well, look into the stream of water, at night, and see *how low* they cast their shadows! Again; have you never observed *smoke*, that image of vanity, and seen *how it throws itself up*; but ere long it *falls down* again to the ground. So true are the words of our Lord, 'He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, while he that exalteth himself shall be abased.' All nature, animate and inanimate, is made to speak in the course of his expository sermons, which is true indeed of oriental preaching in general. But priest Yohannan has a more important requisite to render him an eloquent preacher than figures and flowers — a heart to do good; hence his discourses are commonly practical and spiritual, and often searching and powerful, as well as entertaining."

Priest Yohannan's efficiency as a preacher, and general helper, at length led us to transfer him from the Seminary to the work of an itinerant evangelist and superintendent of village schools, in which labo-

rious employment he continued, ever faithful and earnestly magnifying his office, so long as he was able to labor, till his death. This event occurred a few months before the first extensive revival among the Nestorians ; and in the following account of it, penned by the writer of this sketch at the time, the reader, bearing this in mind, will appreciate the allusions, referring to a period when but few individuals of this people gave evidence of a saving change. If that obituary notice involve a partial repetition of any points above mentioned, the introduction of it entire may still be in place, as confirming the impressions now given, after the lapse of a long period since that notice was written. It is as follows :—

“ September 1, 1845.—I received intelligence of the death of priest Yohannan. He died yesterday in the village of Geogtapa. To us, this is afflictive intelligence. Priest Yohannan was one of our most able and valuable native helpers. He had been in the employ of our mission between nine and ten years. Previous to his connection with us, he was given to much wine, as many of the Nestorian clergy were when we came here, the temptation to this vice being very strong in this land of vineyards, where wine is almost as plenty as water. But on entering our service, priest Yohannan abandoned the use of wine ; and though he did, in a

few instances, yield to temptation, subsequently, when in circumstances of exposure, he always manifested deep repentance for it, till he at length stood on the firm ground of thorough reformation.

“ Priest Yohannan had a good reputation among his people as a *scholar*, which induced us to employ him as the principal teacher of our Seminary. He possessed naturally a mind of the first order; and as he had been in the habit of teaching, more or less, a few children in a place, in different parts of this province, before we commenced our labors among the Nestorians, he had become more familiar with some portions of the Scriptures, and better qualified to instruct, than any other ecclesiastic among his people.

“ Priest Yohannan was a cripple, being lame in his feet. One of his eyes was also entirely blind, and the other quite defective. But he was a man of so much native talent and energy, that notwithstanding these bodily infirmities, he soon became a very efficient teacher in our Seminary, and subsequently, a no less able, energetic, and faithful superintendent of village schools, under the direction of Mr. Stocking.

“ Priest Yohannan was naturally a very serious and thoughtful man. I distinctly recollect receiving a strong impression of this, soon after he com-

menced teaching in our Seminary, when he came to me, one day, and in a deeply serious manner, expressed his grief that his pupils *would laugh, when engaged in the study of the Word of God*, notwithstanding his earnest remonstrances against it. Portions of the Bible were then the only literary matter which we had for the use of our Seminary, and the rude boys could hardly be expected to maintain even the air of seriousness, during the whole day.

“ In the course of months and years, under our influence, and by the blessing of God, priest Yohannan’s views became remarkably clear and decidedly spiritual; and at length, as we have hoped, he manifested truly evangelical feelings; though the great change, which we trust took place in him several years ago, was more gradual and less perceptible in its development, in his case, than that of others, who gave evidence of having passed from death unto life about the same time. Soon after this change in his religious feelings, a corresponding change appeared in priest Yohannan’s manner of preaching. He was naturally very fluent, and even eloquent, notwithstanding the defect in his visage; and his great familiarity with the Word of God, and his deep solicitude for the salvation of his people, rendered him a very solemn preacher of the Gospel, during the rest of his life. He loved

the Bible, and loved to preach it, living up to the apostolic injunction, *to be instant in season and out of season*, in proclaiming the word of life, more than almost any other pious native among the Nestorians, and to an extent not often surpassed among any people. Preaching Christ and him crucified became his living element,—and he was a workman that needed not to be ashamed.

“One of the most prominent traits in priest Yohannan’s character was his *humility*. Often, when I have conversed with him respecting his hopes for eternity, his first reply to my inquiries, after a deep sigh, has been, ‘I am a great sinner.’ This is the more interesting, among a people who are far too much given to *hope*, in regard to their future well-being.

“Priest Yohannan was no hireling in our missionary labors. He entered into them with a hearty interest, as one discharging a personal responsibility to his fellow men and to God. He mourned over the depressed and lost condition of his people, and greatly rejoiced in the progress of our labors for their salvation. It was affecting to observe the warm and artless overflowing of his religious feelings, when thinking and conversing on these subjects. An instance occurs to me at this moment, as stated by one of my associates. When, a few months

ago, we had just printed the *Dairyman's Daughter*, priest Yohannan, happening to call on one of the missionaries, and, seeing a copy of this tract lying in the room, took it up and commenced reading it and he soon became so much engrossed with it, that he could not lay it down until he had finished it. The missionary engaged elsewhere for some time, at length came into the room, and found priest Yohannan reading the tract, weeping over it. 'This poor girl,' said priest Y—, 'repented on hearing *one* sermon; and what will become of our girls, who hear so much truth, and still do not repent?'

"During the past year, priest Yohannan has been laid aside, most of the time, from active labor, by a distressing disease in one of his feet. He had, however, become better, under the partial treatment of Dr. Wright, and was still improving, when he went, a few days ago, to Geog Tapa, and being impatient to be wholly restored, he was there persuaded to place himself under the care of a native physician, who, though he has a high reputation among his people, is like most native physicians, an egregious quack. Priest Yohannan was subjected, by this native doctor, to the fearful ordeal of being submerged in smoke, produced by burning a deadly poison—an experiment much resorted to, for the cure of divers diseases, in this country. He

must have inhaled more or less of that smoke, as he was placed directly over the rising fumes, with his head and whole body covered over with rugs, and kept in that situation till he was almost suffocated. The poor man lingered a few days in a state of great weakness, after being subjected to this barbarous process, and died.

“Priest Abraham, who was with priest Yohannan much of the time, during the last days of his life, informs us, that he was calm and happy in the near prospect of death. His love of preaching manifested itself strikingly to the last. A few days before he died, at his earnest request, he was carried to the church, where the people of the village were assembled for worship,—the blood dropping from incisions made in his diseased foot on the way, and on arriving there, he could not be dissuaded from exerting himself to address the congregation, and his words were literally and affectingly those of a dying man to dying men. And later still, in the course of a religious meeting which was held one evening in the room where he lay sick, he suddenly roused himself, though so weak, and took the discourse from the speaker’s mouth, and proceeded with it, as Deacon John informs us, in almost unearthly strains, equally astonishing and impressing the congregation.

“ In priest Yohannan we have lost an excellent man, and one of the brightest of the few lights in this dark land. In some respects we have no man like-minded. Mr. Stocking, in particular, will deeply feel his loss, in the superintendence of our schools. We are comforted, however, in the confidence, that this heavy loss to us and the Nestorians is priest Yohannan’s infinite gain. And we hope, moreover, that his lamented death, as well as the indefatigable labors of his life, may still be blessed to his people. The more serious part of the clergy are deeply affected by his removal. May they, and the many scores of young men who have been under his instruction and influence, catch his falling mantle.”

The desire expressed in these last lines was soon answered. Priest Yohannan had been a bright light in the deep darkness that enshrouded his people, during the early years of our mission. He emerged rapidly, with a few companions, from the gloom of moral midnight, and shone as a luminary, till a large cluster of his pupils and others were ready to rise up, each brighter than himself, and more than fill his place, when he was thus suddenly transferred, as we trust, to a higher orbit. The remark has often been made by converts, since his death, during seasons of revival, “ how would priest

Yohannan have rejoiced to see a time like this!" May it not be, that from the light of heaven, he has rejoiced over such seasons? And though priest Yohannan's joy has not been the joy of bodily sight, like that of the good and venerable Mar Elias, a kindred spirit still among the living, ever rejoicing with exceeding joy in being *eclipsed* by scores of eloquent young preachers rising up around him, may it not have been the yet more ecstatic rapture of the angels, who rejoice over one sinner that repenteth!

The only surviving child of priest Yohannan, an intelligent girl of fourteen, is now a member of our Female Seminary,—a very promising representative of her lamented father.



S A R A H,

DAUGHTER OF PRIEST ESHOO.



## SARAH, DAUGHTER OF PRIEST ESHOO.

BY MISS FIDELIA FISK.

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IT was on one of the last days of 1831, that the subject of this narrative began her brief earthly existence. She was the eldest child of Priest Eshoo, who at that time resided in Gawar, his native place. He has for many years lived with his family in Oroomiah, but retains a vivid impression of his early home, the birthplace of Sarah, and of the day and hour his naturally proud spirit was humbled, by the announcement that a *daughter* was born to him. He was seated at the time in the *Decana*, (the elevated part of the stable,) puffing his yard-long pipe, and occasionally replenishing it from the tobacco bag hanging from his girdle. Around him were his brothers and nephews, who had assembled to learn of him; for he was, in their eyes, a very wise man, though as yet a mere youth. Without, all was in

wild commotion ; the snow, piling fast around the priest's humble home, soon entirely covered it, as it had done many times before. When he learned, for the first time, that he was the father of a little daughter, his pipe was snatched from his mouth, rested on his hand, and in an angry tone he replied, “What is a *daughter*?” The present which would have been given to the bearer of the tidings, had the little one been a *son*, was withheld, and the unhappy father clung more closely to his pipe, as if he would thus mitigate his sorrow.

The child was cared for as other children are in these lands. She was “salted in the day she was born,” (see Ezekiel 16: 4,) and subjected to all the superstitious rites so carefully practised by mothers over their new-born children. After a few days, she was laid in her hard cradle, bound to it, and seldom taken from it for months. The cradle being covered, we can hardly suppose that, during that long winter, the father often saw the little one. He did not wish to see her; for he had a deep controversy with his Maker, for giving him such a “worthless thing as a little girl.”

Months passed by ; the child was oftener taken from the cradle, and thus oftener met the father's eye ; and strange to say, she manifested strong attachment for that parent, who had thus cast her off.

She never seemed more happy than when in her father's arms ; and if he refused to take her, she would nestle by his side, as if determined to win his heart. She was successful ; she became the pet, the darling, of that once aggrieved father ; and when another little girl was added to his family, he proudly called Sarah his *son*, and sometimes spoke of teaching her to *read*. "And so you will make her a *priest*, will you ?" was the reply, at such times, of her mother and other women, who would almost as soon have expected to see the rugged mountains of Koordistan becoming plains, as to see a female learning to read.

Sarah lived nearly four years in Gawar, and then, guided by a heavenly hand, she was brought to Oroomiah, not only to learn to read, but to learn in Christ's high school, and to be fitted for eternal rest. In the summer of 1835 the Koords overran Gawar, taking from the poor people their flocks, burning, in some villages, almost every house, and reducing the people to great extremities. Priest Eshoo and his brothers shared in the calamity. A winter of want was before them, and in trying to make arrangements for living, the priest (at that time a deacon) and his brothers, fell into a serious quarrel. Though younger than they were, he was an *ecclesiastic*, and would not be ruled by them. He almost immedi-

ately threatened to leave for Oroomiah, which he looked upon, at that distance, as a land flowing with milk and honey, which he had only to stretch forth his hand, and take and eat. The threat was carried into execution, and a bleak November day found the family on their way to Oroomiah. Had they been seen at that hour by an American, they would probably have been taken for a company of wandering gipsies. The mother carried the youngest daughter in a sack, on her back, and the father carried Sarah in the same way, who had become in his eye of such value, that he was not ashamed to be seen with her.

They found their way to Dégala, (a village some two miles from the city of Oroomiah,) and there, for a long time, they ate the bread of charity, begging it from door to door, and lodging in a stable. The priest acted as a kind of servant to the priest of that village, and when the mission Seminary was established, he in that capacity attended his temporary superior to the school, walking behind him and bearing the pipes of both in his hand. He was gradually introduced to the notice of Mr. Perkins and Doctor Grant, and as they learned to appreciate his fine mind and scholarship, he was employed by them. Being one day brought into Doctor Grant's house, he was very kindly met by Mrs. Grant, and

her heart, ever yearning for Nestorian females, led her to propound her usual inquiries to fathers, "Have you any daughters? Will you not send them to the little school we are going to have?" This renewed in the father the desire he began to cherish, while in Gawar, that his daughter should learn to read. The great object was never lost sight of by him; but it was not till the spring of 1841, when the family removed from Degala to the city, that Sarah was found in the mission school. She had then just entered her tenth year,—a tall, slender, dark-eyed child, who even then gave indications of finding an early grave. She was often a great sufferer, but applied herself so diligently and successfully to her studies, that she was soon the best scholar in the school, and that rank she ever retained.

We had, previous to Sarah's death, very little of the Bible in modern Syriac, and the Scriptures, which were her principal study, were accessible to her, only by obtaining a knowledge of the ancient Syriac. This she so far mastered, as to be considered the very best scholar in it, among the people, and her acquaintance with the Bible was such as is rarely equalled, by a child of her age, anywhere. She was a living Concordance, and so perfectly familiar with all parts of the sacred Word, that she

would turn almost immediately to any text mentioned to her. She has thus, in school, found thousands of texts for her teachers, with a readiness which surprised all. Her historical and doctrinal knowledge of the Bible was even more remarkable than her readiness in turning to any given text. The lamented Mr. Stocking, who sometimes taught her and often conversed with her, used to call her "the best theologian of the people." She with other pupils had also, under the instruction of the first Mrs. Stoddard, learned to sing sweetly a number of our favorite tunes. But while thus rapidly growing in knowledge, and other acquirements, she was destitute of grace. Her declining health had led us all to feel much anxiety in regard to her spiritual state, but she manifested none for herself till the early part of 1846.

On the morning of the first Monday of the year, unknown to us, she went to one, who, she knew, sometimes had serious thoughts, and said to her: "My sister, we ought to repent; we do not well to spend our days in this way. Shall we ever find a better time than to-day, when so many are praying for us?" She had found one whose heart beat in unison with hers, and they tearfully resolved to spend the day in seeking the salvation of their souls. At morning prayers, when the other girls left the room, they lingered, and with tearful

eyes asked leave to spend the day alone. The request was granted, and they went each to a cold cellar to weep. Sarah was the first to give her heart to the Saviour, the first-fruit of the blessed revival of 1846, and the first to go home to glory. From the hour of that Monday morning's resolve she never seemed to hesitate or to waver. When she had found peace to her own soul she sought to bring others to Christ. But while thus careful for others, she did not forget herself. Fearing lest she might be deceived, how many times did she plead earnestly with us to tell her every point of danger; and oh how much more earnestly did she entreat the Lord to show her just where she was standing, and to lead her to the "rock that was higher" than she!

Sarah's Christian course was a brief one. In five short months from the time she gave her heart to the Saviour, her body rested in her lonely grave. Her time was very short, in which to evince her love for the Redeemer, but she perhaps, in that time, did more that was pleasing to her Lord and Master than many do in a long life. Though a great sufferer, she never shrank from labor. She gave hours, every day, to her closet duties, and the rest of her time she seemed to consider sacred to the Lord. She did much for her companions,— and

about twenty of them she embraced as sisters in Christ; and much for the many females who frequented our dwelling. When once remonstrated with for doing so much, she meekly replied, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

Her attachment to the means of grace was very strong. As long as she could reach our mission chapel with assistance, she was always there to feed on the Word. Her painfully interesting appearance in the house of God,—her tall, slender, emaciated form,—her shrill cough,—her beautiful but now sunken eyes and features,—her difficult breathing, yet her sweet and almost angelic voice in singing,—combined with so much of heaven as she always carried with her, led her young brothers and sisters in Christ often to speak of her as *Elizabeth Walbridge*, just ready to leave them for heaven. Many of the hopeful converts had read the Dairyman's Daughter, for the first time, during this season of religious interest.

Sarah's desires for the salvation of her dear father commenced with those for herself. After seeing a few of the young men of the Seminary bowing under the load of their sins, he too began to feel that all was not right with him; and we soon found the once proud, self-righteous priest,

sitting in our midst, weeping like a child, and so overcome that he was unable to answer the tenderest inquiries for his soul's salvation. But he found peace, and Sarah was the first to know that her father was in the kingdom. His first conversation with her, on the subject of religion, was to tell her that Jesus was precious to his soul. He had known that his child was anxious in regard to her eternal interests, but he was not prepared to find her full of humble hope and holy joy.

The next day after this conversation, as the missionary pressed on him the duty of laboring for the salvation of the souls of his family, he replied : "Sarah is far beyond me in grace and knowledge. She can teach me far better than I can teach her." The strong attachment, which had, up to this time, existed between father and daughter, had now ripened into Christian love, and most delightful was their fellowship for a season on earth. Scarcely a day passed, in which they did not pray together, and Sarah often led the devotions of the family at her father's request.

The mother at first scoffed, but soon, with tearful eyes, she asked, "What must I do to be saved?" A younger sister, for weeks, tried her most sorely, being given to every thing evil; but Sarah's gentle

spirit taught her a lesson she could not forget. She first bowed to instruction, and then to the Saviour.

As the spring opened upon us, it was evident that our loved Sarah must leave us. Her young companions, whom she had taught the way of life, gathered around her as if they would keep her; they could not bear the thought of her being taken from us; but they sought to stay an angel in its course. She must leave them. The dross had been purged; the spirit was meet for the company of the redeemed. She remained in the school till the middle of May, a blessing to us all. It was a beautiful day as is ever seen beneath Persia's fair sky, when she went forth from her loved school, to come back no more. The morning exercises of the school had closed, and as her companions scattered, she lingered, and gently whispered in her teacher's ear, "I am very sick. I think I had better go home to die." When told that some one would accompany her to her father's house, a few steps from the mission premises, she replied, "I will be ready soon. I wish a few moments alone." Then she sought for a closet, in which to pour out her soul. But there was none; praying souls had filled them all, while she lingered; but there was a curtain, which shut off a part of one of our rooms, that met her eye. She went behind that, and as if

no curtain hid eternity from her view, she prayed for the last time with us.

As she passed out, leaning on a friendly arm, she looked sweetly back on the birthplace of her soul, gathered a few flowers, and thus left us. She went to her home to suffer excruciatingly for a few days. Her cough and difficult breathing forbid her lying down by night or day; but she still felt that she must be doing for souls. Not a day passed, in which she did not gather the females of her neighborhood around her, and press on them the duty of repentance, and with broken accent carry them to a mercy-seat.

She kept up a lively interest in the precious revival, which might be said to be still in progress when she died. She loved dearly to have her father by her side, but she loved more to have him go and preach the everlasting gospel. The day before her death, which was Saturday, it was proposed that her father go to Tergaver, (twenty-five miles from the city of Oroomiah,) and preach. He hesitated; but as soon as she knew it, she sent for him, saying, "My father, do not stay for me. Go and preach, and I will pray for you." He left her to preach, and to see her no more. Before his return, she rested in the silent grave.

On Sabbath morning, she was as comfortable as

she had been for several days ; but soon after noon, it was evident to all that she must go. Her sufferings became intense, and for a moment, forgetting her father's absence, she said, " Let my father come." She was told that her father had gone to Tergaver. She replied, " Oh, now I remember—he has gone to preach the gospel; do not send for him on my account; let him preach." It was then proposed to send for her teacher, who had left a little before. She said, " I wish to see her once more, but you must not call her. This is the hour when she prays with my companions. Let her pray."

From this time, her sufferings were so great that she hardly spoke for an hour. Just as the silver cord was loosing, she said in a clear voice, " My mother, I shall go very soon. Raise me up, that I may commit my spirit." The mother raised the dying child. She knelt, supported by maternal love, and said, " Lord Jesus, receive — — ." Here she stopped, for she had not strength to finish the words of the dying Stephen. We doubt not that her prayer was heard, and that from the bended knee she went up to join the holy martyr, and perhaps by him to be carried to the Saviour's bosom.

The announcement of Sarah's death to her companions, and the burial, have been touchingly recorded by one of those companions, another Sarah,

who lives to bless those for whom the departed one labored, and we shall be pardoned if we give them in her words:—

“ When she died, we were none of us with her; we were in a prayer-meeting, and Mr. Stocking was speaking to us about death, and being ready for it. Suddenly, the door opened; one entered, and whispered in Mr. Stocking’s ear, ‘ Sarah is dead.’ When we heard the startling intelligence, fear came upon us. We went with our teacher to accompany to the grave that member (our sister) separated from us. When we entered the yard of mourning, what a heart-melting scene we beheld! There were so many assembled that it was difficult for a person to enter. Their faces were all filled with sadness, because of that young damsel, just departed for heaven. When all reached, they had carried her away to prepare her for the grave; so we stopped with her mother; and what shall I say of that afflicted mother? I cannot express her anguish for her dear child, who had now passed out of her hands; and that anguish increased as she looked on her companions.

“ They soon called us to look at Sarah for the last time. We all went—stood over the coffin—looked on that face, and remembered how often we had conversed, read, sung, and prayed together. As we

looked on that livid countenance, our hearts were melted more and more. Fearful thoughts like waves rolled over our hearts, when we thought that perhaps we should not die such a happy death. The voice that used to sing with us is silent; but we thought, though this bodily tongue is silent, not so the spiritual one; it is singing hallelujahs to the Lamb.

“The time came that they should cover her from our sight. The coffin lid was closed, and she was borne to the grave. We followed after the bier. As we went to accompany her, we were all silent; peace, only peace, was in the road which we were going. We soon reached the place where our sister should sleep till the morning of the resurrection—we stood over that grave—saw how they placed her there—how the clods of the valley fell on her, and heard the solemn song, ‘The body to dust, earth to earth, dust to dust, and ashes to ashes.’ But oh, what a change! While the diseased body was returning to dust, the soul had returned to its Father, and the companion of immortal spirits was singing the sweet song of Moses and the Lamb.

“After she was buried, all left except ourselves; we wished to stop and reflect. As we stood there, our teacher spoke solemn words to us,—‘that we should be ready, for the day was coming, when oth-

ers would thus gather about our grave and commit us to the dust.' As she was speaking, her eye fell on the first star of evening just rising. She told us her thoughts about that beautiful star,—that as *that* was rising on the earth, so Sarah was rising, a bright star, in the third heavens. That star is a sweet remembrance to us, every time we see it rise; for it was at that time, that we committed our sister to the dust.

"The time came for us to take leave of Sarah. We left her sleeping in peace, low in the cold ground, and returned silently to our homes. We could not open our mouths for a single word, for the voice of God was quietly and very gently whispering in our ears, 'Be ye also ready.' Our hearts were full of deep feeling, as all trod our way and thought, 'Our feet will soon cease to tread this path, as our sister's have done.' We thought, how 'we were walking these earthly streets, but she is being borne by an honorable company to the seats of the blessed above.' Then why should we mourn that she is separated from us? Shall we mourn that her sorrows and groans are turned to delightful praises? Shall we mourn that that weak one is a spirit made strong by her Saviour? Shall we mourn that her sorrow is turned to joy? Shall we mourn for her?

No! Let us rather mourn for ourselves, dwelling in this world of sin, and still sinning!

“With such reflections we reached our home. It was an affecting time to us; and now we cannot forget her, as we see her empty seat, and her books in their place. No! we can never forget her! Oh, who of us, her sisters, shall meet her above?”

It was on the 13th of June, 1846, that Sarah thus sweetly fell asleep, and was followed to her last home by so many for whom she had labored and prayed. Her remains rest near those of the sainted Mrs. Grant, awaiting the happy hour when they shall be united with the glorified spirit.

B L I N D M A R T H A .



## BLIND MARTHA.

BY MISS FIDELIA FISK.

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BLIND MARTHA was not always blind. When an infant, her beautiful dark eyes were the joy of her friends; and, borne about Geog Tapa, her native village, by her little brother, her pleasant, loving glances were familiar to all the villagers.

We do not know precisely the date of Martha's birth, but suppose that she was born sometime in the year 1830. For a little less than two years, she looked out on the pleasant light of the sun, and then the smallpox deprived her, as it does many children in Persia, of sight. The eyes literally run out—the eyelids closed and left the little one in perfect darkness. Of her early childhood we know very little. Her parents have never been able to tell us much of her. Ignorant and sinful themselves, they thought not at all of the souls

of their children, and we are led to suppose, that the blind one hardly knew what it was, in her misfortune, to receive much sympathy, even from her own mother.

Spared till a school was established in Geog Tapa by our mission, little Martha early found her way into it. The teacher, a kind-hearted man, felt far more than the mother's interest in her. He sought to convey truth to her mind, and when told by one of the missionaries, how the blind are taught in America, he earnestly desired to teach his pupil in the same way. A box of clay was set before little Martha, in which the Syriac alphabet was traced with a reed. This was the lesson for many a long day, but it was well learned, and she also succeeded well in tracing all the letters herself. She learned spelling lessons in the same way; but her indefatigable teacher soon saw that his resources were coming to an end. He could not help her in reading the Bible; so this plan was relinquished, and the blind pupil took her seat by the side of those just beginning to read. Their lesson for the day she would commit, and, continuing to do this for a long time, she became very familiar with many portions of Scripture, and tracts, that went out from our press. She thus passed years in the village school of Geog Tapa, storing her mind with

Scripture truth ; but we are not aware that she had any serious thoughts in regard to her own personal salvation, till February, 1846. At that time, the religious interest, so marked and so delightful in our Seminaries, had extended to Geog Tapa. Meetings were held every evening, which were very solemn, and souls were inquiring the way to heaven. Martha heard of these meetings, and some kind heart carried her there ; for in her midnight darkness she could not go alone. She had attended these meetings but a few evenings, when her heart was deeply affected — she saw herself a lost and ruined sinner, and her anguish was extreme. Her mother, a stranger to such feelings, both in experience and observation, thought her insane, and shut her up till she should become sober. But she soon saw that this brought no change to her distressed child ; so she allowed her once more to go to the meetings. She was now obliged to go alone, for no one in the family had any sympathy with her. But He, who is eyes to the blind, helped her to find her way, and from this time, never was blind Martha missing from the meeting held every evening. Her anxiety at length gave way to peace that was like a river. From March, 1846, till June, 1847, she never seemed to doubt, for a moment, her acceptance with the beloved ; nor did any one who knew

her doubt it. Her countenance was now an index of what reigned within — so sweetly peaceful, that we were almost ready to envy the sightless one. She held on her way, during the summer of 1846, with striking consistency. Other young Christians were sometimes ready to mingle again with the world. But not so Martha; she seemed every day to get nearer her home, and to have very rich fore-tastes of eternal blessedness. In the autumn, she earnestly requested admission to our Female Seminary. The expediency of allowing her to become a member of the school was for some time doubted, but her entreaties prevailed; and never, for a moment afterward, did her teacher doubt the wisdom of the decision. During that winter, she grew rapidly in knowledge and in grace. When the spring opened, she could repeat almost the entire New Testament. This was a great comfort to her, because, as she said, "she could read a chapter, when she had meetings." During the winter, a few mercy drops fell on the school. A few souls, as we hoped, were brought to Christ. For these, Martha labored most faithfully, and she was probably instrumental of more good than any other pupil. All loved blind Martha — they believed her sincere — they could never smile over her warnings.

Martha was a meditative, praying Christian. She often spoke of *reading*, with great delight, some particular chapter. The sightless girl never neglected *reading* as she called it, a portion of Scripture, morning, noon, and evening. She did this by repeating her chapter silently, and dwelling on each verse. This done, she would go to her closet. Of her delight in secret devotions, one of her companions says: "She was a lover of prayer. Her closet was a sweet place to her, for there she met her God, and had delightful communion with Him, even as a child with her father. We used to notice her when she went into her closet. She used to remain a long time, for she was engaged in sweet converse. I think there was no season so pleasant to her, as when she met her Redeemer."

Early in the spring of 1847, Martha's health, which had been previously very imperfect, began to fail. She was obliged to be often absent from her lessons, and at length was entirely confined to her bed. Every indication of decline seemed to be rapidly settling on her, and nothing done for her arrested the disease. She felt that she must die, and longed to die with us, and rest by "Sarah," whom she had learned to love most tenderly, and whom she hoped *soon to see* above. But her friends were very anxious that she should be carried home,

and we consented, though we did wish that she should die peacefully with us. After she left the school, which was the first of May, her teachers saw her but twice. Those visits were very delightful, as giving new evidence of her being a very dear child of Him, who, upon earth, never passed by the blind. There was not another pious soul at her home. They were not only a worldly family, but not an hour passed, in which Martha was not tried by hearing most wicked and profane conversation. Oaths and revilings were constantly falling on the ears of her, whose heart was already attuned to the song of Moses and the Lamb. None tried her more than the brother who had cared for her in early infancy. He seemed to delight in adding to the sorrows of his departing sister. O how lovingly she entreated him to be reconciled to her dearest Friend! How earnestly she prayed for him, when he was so reviling her and others, that she was obliged to cover her head with her quilt and stop her ears, that she might speak in his behalf with the Holy One. The Sabbath before her death, when he had been desecrating the day most fearfully, she once more drew him to her side, and plead with him to keep the Holy Sabbath. Her words affected his heart; he could no more go with the sabbath-breaker; and a few months after Martha's

death, he became a humble Christian. He still lives to thank God for his blind sister. He was soon instrumental in the conversion of his wife; and at a recent examination of the large Sabbath-school in Geog Tapa, he brought her forward, a reader of the Bible, taught by her own husband! When the fact was announced in the great company assembled, it was whispered from one to another: "Oh! *he* would not be ashamed to teach his wife, for he is the brother of *blind Martha*; and his wife would be willing to be taught by him, for she is the *daughter of the good old Pilgrim Hor-medz*."

After Martha left us, she was very anxious to have her school companions visit her. Though six miles from her, they always loved to walk that distance to meet their blind sister, and to comfort her in her last days. No recreation was so highly prized by them, as a day spent with Martha. When with her, the time was always occupied in reading her favorite portions of Scripture, talking of them, singing and prayer. She would never allow them to leave her till they had sung, "Jerusalem, my happy home;" and one of those who often visited her says, "We always knew from her countenance, that while we were singing, her spirit was walking the New Jerusalem." When they inquired in regard to

her health, she would say, "The Lord helps me." When pressed to tell them particularly, she would say, "O my sisters, the Lord helps me; that is enough."

Often when this group of loving Christian sisters gathered, they would have five or six prayers. When it was sometimes suggested, that such seasons might weary her, she would always say, "I know I am weak, but prayer never tires me."

It was considered not only by Martha's school companions, but by all our helpers, and all the young Christians, a privilege to stand by *Martha's sick-bed*, and listen to her heavenly words. A young man from the male seminary, being in the village, at one time, for a single night, was called for, early in the morning, by a villager, to return to the city. "I cannot go till I have prayed with our blind sister, and got from her manna for the road," was his expressive reply. Thus did she comfort and strengthen many a young Christian, in these days of her weakness.

It was the strong desire of Martha's young friends to be with her, when she should see her Saviour coming to Jordan's banks to take her over. But they were denied this privilege. She died very early, a lovely June morning, when no one was watching by her. At early dawn, she said to her mother, who

was near her, "Mother, the day breaks; I think Jesus is coming for me now; let me go." The mother rose, but seeing no particular change in her, again composed herself to sleep. When she awoke, the sun was shining brightly, and she hastened to Martha, but Jesus *had come* and taken his dear child. Eternal day had opened upon her,—a last sweet smile played on her features; and well it might; for who would not smile to be able to say, "Jesus is coming for me now?"

As soon as it was known in the village that Martha had gone, her companions assembled, and instead of the sad scenes of mourning, often witnessed in Nestorian houses, on such occasions, six prayers of thanksgiving were offered to Him who came down to meet the dear child in the swelling stream, and who gave her the victory in the trying hour.

At evening, a large company gathered around an open grave, to commit the peaceful sleeper to the dust—the first of a large company of pious ones, who have since laid their precious dust on the green hill-side of Geog Tapa. With them, she will awake, no more to be called *blind Martha*, but to see the Lord coming in the air, and to see Him forever.



YONAN, THE PRINTER.



## YONAN, THE PRINTER.

BY MR. EDWARD BREATH.

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YONAN was a native of Charbash, a Nestorian village situated two miles north of the city of Oroomiah. He was the son of a widowed mother, who was a sharer in the poverty of the larger portion of her people. He was a small boy when the Nestorian mission was established, and became a member of the Seminary within two months after it was opened. The senior member of our mission, who then had the superintendence of that department, says of Yonan, that "he was very perfect and manly in appearance, and soon became the acknowledged model of the school. I do not remember ever having had occasion to correct him for any misdemeanor, even the smallest; but I often pointed other boys to his modest, interesting example. He

excelled particularly as a beautiful reader, and in declamation."

On the commencement of labors in our printing department, Yonan was selected, with others of the more promising boys of the seminary, to become a printer. He soon became a very good compositor, altogether superior to his fellow-workmen; and to the end of his career, he was always selected for the work that required the most skill and taste. All this may seem to entitle him to but a slight degree of praise; but it must be remembered, that the Nestorians of Persia are an ignorant and oppressed people, much more so than other oriental Christians; that they are not allowed a place in the bazar; and in the mechanic arts, are only permitted to practise the trades of carpenter and mason. Besides, previous to the establishment of our press, printing in Oroomiah was a marvel and a mystery, there being nothing of the kind here, and the printing of all Persia being confined to a few lithographic presses, located at Tabreez and Tehrân.

In the printing-office, Yonan's conduct was marked by the same modesty and general propriety that had characterized it in the seminary. He was uniformly courteous and forbearing in his intercourse with his fellow-workmen. In a clashing of interests, he preferred to surrender his rights,

rather than engage in disputation. This was the more remarkable, as the Nestorians are naturally impulsive, and are subject to no parental restraints in youth. When exasperated, they vent floods of low abuse against their adversaries, each striving to outdo the other in this ignoble warfare. This is so rooted in their nature, that it seemed impossible to prevent it among the majority of the printers by ordinary means. They were threatened, punished, dismissed even, but the evil was not at all diminished. As a last resort, one of the workmen, a priest, was required to scrub out the mouth of an offending deacon, with soap and ashes, by means of an old tooth-brush used about the press. This mode of discipline was so mortifying, and made those concerned in it so much the objects of ridicule, that it operated in some degree as a check upon this vile practice. From what has been said of Yonan above, it will be inferred that he was free from this vulgarity. He had a pleasant, cheerful, and affable manner; by the kindness of his nature securing the love and esteem of all who knew him. "When he was reviled, he reviled not again;" but on the contrary, often, by the gentleness of his deportment, quenched the wrath of his adversaries.

Yonan was apt to learn, and drank in greedily the new truths he heard from his instructors. At

the commencement of our mission, modern science was a heresy among the Nestorians. They held that the earth was a plain, surrounded by a vast sea, and encircled by a huge serpent (leviathan) which effectually prevented any hardy adventurers from navigating those waters beyond a certain limit. The sun was not stationary, but rose and set. When it had completed its course, it was dragged by angels through the great sea surrounding the earth, and started anew on its race the succeeding day. These puerile notions Yonan soon learned intelligently to combat. He was found, one day, in the printing-office, standing in the sunshine, with a broken jug in his hand, surrounded by his fellow-workmen, to whom he was explaining the earth and the moon, and illustrating the doctrine of eclipses.

Though Yonan's conduct was almost entirely unexceptionable, it was not until January, 1846, that there was decided evidence of his being a Christian. One day, during the powerful revival of that year, he appeared in a room of a member of the mission who had the immediate care of him, with moistened eyes, but with a calm manner, and apparently with great determination, saying that he had come to record his vow, that from that time onward, he was resolved to be the Lord's. And

from that day, his course *was* onward. There never was the least occasion to doubt the sincerity of his profession, nor any reason to fear that he had been mistaken. He was in the habit of going from house to house, in his village, reading the Word of God to his ignorant people, praying with them, and urging them to repentance and newness of life. He was universally respected by them, and they would often say among themselves, "if this man does not go to heaven, who will?"

In his village, there was only occasional preaching on the Sabbath, but he did not pass his time as the Nestorians almost universally did, in visiting the city for business or pleasure, or going from village to village, or gathering on the shady or sunny side of the street, as the weather was warm or cool, for the purpose of smoking and of gossip. He would engage in such labors of love as are mentioned above, or retire to his own room for reading, prayer, and meditation. In the simple language of his people, one who knew him well gives this testimony to his character: "He would not mix with wicked men, or sit in the assembly of the drunkard. Neither would he attend disorderly weddings, or allow himself to taste wine. He was no lover of the good things of this world, nor proud, nor did he delight in fine clothes. In truth, during

the last years of his life, he appeared like an angel. Although he was not a preacher, yet his godly walk and conversation were a light that shone in the printing-office, and much more in his village. Yes, he had the image of his Saviour upon him!"

Such was Yonan's course, until he was summoned home. Previous to the visitation of the cholera in Oroomiah, in 1847, he had a presentiment that he should soon die, and talked of his departure with composure. No serious importance is attached to this presentiment. It is rather mentioned as showing that his thoughts were turned to death, and that he could contemplate it with calmness.

In the month of August, 1847, he was engaged, with one of his companions, in binding a number of New Testaments, which work they had taken by the job. The cholera had driven the members of the mission from the city, and the other printers were also scattered to their homes. Yonan was in the habit of coming from his village in the morning, performing his daily work, and returning to his home late in the day. The keys of the printing-office were intrusted to him. One day (it was the last of August) he went away feeling unwell. The next morning, he did not appear as usual, and it was soon ascertained that he was sick. Dr. Wright, who was then at Seir, thus communicates the result

of his case to other members of the mission who had retired to the neighboring mountain district of Tergawer. "Poor Yonan has gone! His disease run its course in about twenty-four hours. Priest Aslan was with him a good deal before his death, and he states that he asked Yonan if he felt afraid, and he replied, 'No.' This is all that I can hear, indicating the state of his mind in view of death. The disease took hold of him with a dreadful grasp, and gave his mind but little chance to reflect upon his condition. But in his case, fortunately, there is little occasion to search for evidence of his preparedness for death, during the last hours of his mortal struggle. He was a good young man, and when in *health* gave evidence enough to satisfy us all that he loved the Lord. He was a man of few words, modest and retiring; and still, as I have often heard, he used not to shrink from declaring the Gospel to the people of his village. He died with the keys of the printing-office in his pocket."

Mr. Perkins says of him: "I took pains to inquire about his Christian character at the time of his death, and found that it had left a very precious savor in his village. He had long been very consistent; but for a few months, as if impelled to finish his work, he had been peculiarly earnest and zealous, in religious efforts to benefit his own family

and neighbors. I do not believe that the grave has closed over a better Nestorian since I have been in the field."

Thus died Yonan, the printer, on the 31st of August, 1847, at the early age of twenty-six years.

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#### ISMIAL, THE PRINTER.

ISMIAL, another printer, did not give the same clear evidence of being a Christian, constantly manifested by his companion, Yonan; yet his walk and character were such, that those who knew him best are not without hope that he too has entered into rest.

Ismial [Ishmael] was a native of the city of Oroomiah, a carpenter—and was about twenty-five years of age when the press was put into operation here, which was in 1841. His general good conduct and intelligence, which had secured him a high place in the estimation of the people, together with his skill and ingenuity, drew our attention to him as a very suitable person to perform various duties in the printing-office. He had previously taught himself to read and write. The

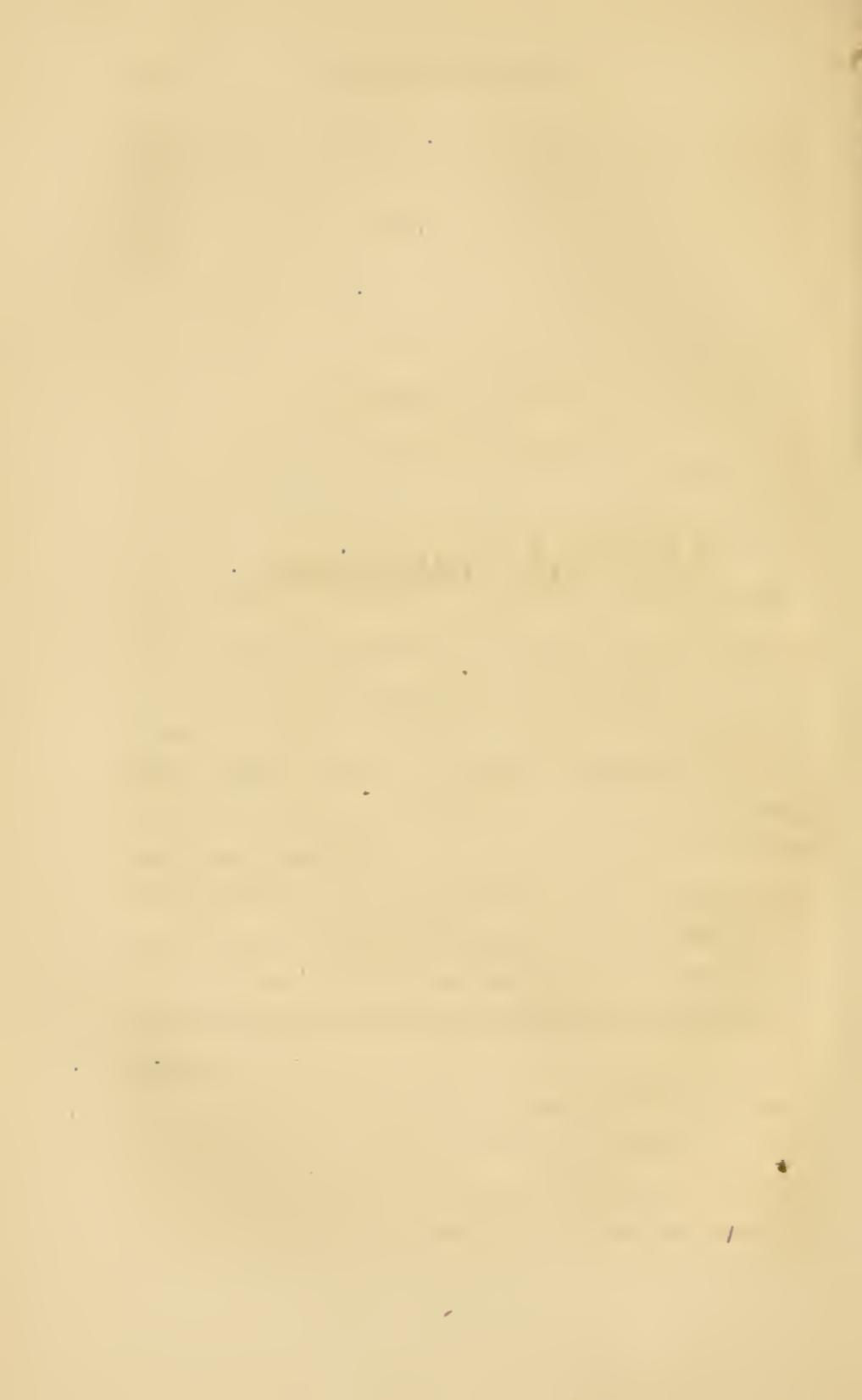
duties referred to were multifarious. As carpenter, he made all the "furniture" of the printing-office; also, all the cases and stands. He soon became a good pressman, acted as foreman, corrected the last proof, and saw that the form went properly to press. He was the best bookbinder in the establishment. He was a type-founder, and cast most of the type used during his life. He could also cut punches very well; and he made a type-mould that answered a very good purpose, compelled by the necessities of the case. He also "fitted" matrices; that is, filed, straightened, and thus adjusted, to the type-mould, the pieces of copper into which the steel-lettered punch is driven. He was never at a loss, and in any country would have passed for a man of rare ingenuity. He possessed great influence in the printing-office. The workmen all knew that he could do many things which they could not, and they were constantly applying to him for assistance.

Ismial also had a trembling hope that he became a Christian, during the revival of 1846; and he was, without doubt, brought so far as to renounce all confidence in fasts and forms, and to see their utter worthlessness as a means of securing God's favor. He, however, never manifested all that tenderness of feeling which it is so delightful to wit-

ness in the young convert. At the same time, it would be difficult to point to any act of his life subsequent to 1846, wholly inconsistent with a Christian profession. He was a prosperous man, and seemed at times more deeply engrossed in the world than was fit; but how few there are, even in a more favored land, that are competent to sit in judgment upon him for this!

In the month of June, 1847, in the midst, it is feared, of worldly plans, adding vineyard to vineyard, he was suddenly stricken by a violent lung fever, which soon left no hope of his recovery. As his end approached, his weeping friends gathered about him, hopeless in their grief. One woman cried out, with a stentorian voice, "Oh, Saint Mary, help! Oh, Saint Mary, help!" On which Ismial interposed, in a still louder voice, as if in rebuke, and to show from whom help must come, "Oh, Lord Jesus, help! Oh, Lord Jesus, help!" The earnestness of his manner impressed those who were present, and the hope was confidently expressed, that he had made Christ his portion.

LITTLE HANNAH.



## LITTLE HANNAH.

BY MISS FIDELIA FISK.

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IT was our risen Lord who said, "Feed my lambs;" and the true Christian can hardly fail to hear this welcome commission, as day by day he communes with Him, who left a Peter, looking "steadfastly toward heaven," as if to catch a glimpse of the "many mansions" he went to prepare for his lambs. If, among the last of a Saviour's cares on earth, were the lambs, should not his followers love them well? If not too young for his care in heaven, are they too young to be cared for on earth?

In the blessed revivals, with which we have been favored at Oroomiah, we have had precious evidence that the child's heart is a fit receptacle for grace, even in a dark land. Among those early brought to Christ, some still live, strong in the Lord, and bright lights in the midst of darkness. Others needed not

long to show to a wicked world, that they were the little ones, whom Jesus loves. A few short months were enough to make them known, as plants of the heavenly gardener.

The passer-by, as he has felt the rude blasts that so often chill us in this cold world, wonders not that these tender plants were so early transplanted to a more genial soil. Of the latter class was our "little Hannah." When in our Female Seminary, the youngest member and loved tenderly by all, she was familiarly called "our little Hannah." Yes! she was *ours* on earth, lent to us a few brief days, to show us the beauties of religion in the child's heart, and then she was called to a better place.

It was December, 1845, that this little girl, then about nine years of age, came to us. It was just as the first breath of winter was bidding us to gather our little flock closely around us, that a thinly clad woman stood at our door, begging that she might "see the lady who takes care of Nestorian girls." When shown to her, she refused to sit, for her business required haste. Invited to make that business known, she said, "I have an only daughter. My other daughters all sleep in Geog Tapa hill. She is a *little* girl, and the loved of her mother. I want her to stay with me, but she wishes to come to school. For three days she has refused to eat, say-

ing she cannot eat till she sees the school." The mother was told, that it would hardly be possible to receive another pupil. Then were a Nestorian mother's tears and eloquence called forth. Oh, how earnestly she plead! "My dear Hannah," she said, "is a *little* girl; she will only need a *little* corner. I will bring a bed for her; and I have made a new dress for her before I came to ask a place. If you do not let her come, I know her tender heart will break."

A missionary brother, who had often seen Hannah in the village school, moved by the mother's appeal, replied, with tears, "Yes, she may come; if a 'corner' cannot be found for her in school, she shall have a 'corner' with my children."

The next morning found the happy child seated in the school-room. She left Geog Tapa ere a December sun had risen, that she might be early in her place. Her pleasant, happy face, ever robed in smiles, with her kind, gentle manners, made her a favorite with us all. As a scholar she was very diligent, and did all she could, but her progress was never rapid. In after months, she had, we doubt not, a strong sympathy with the feelings of her pious brother, then a member of the male seminary, who, when weeping over his Hebrew lesson, said,

“It is much more pleasant to me to study free grace, than to study Hebrew.”

Though naturally amiable and lovely, Hannah wanted one thing. Her heart was a stranger to God, but she realized it not. Under her mother’s training, she had woven for herself a complete robe of self-righteousness, and so closely did the little one wrap her mantle about her, that it was very difficult to bring any truth to bear upon her heart. When, in the January following, many in both our seminaries were weeping over unforgiven sin, she had no sympathy with their feelings. In meetings, when almost every head was bowed, and the tear of penitence was flowing from almost every eye, Hannah’s sunny face and tearless eye looked out upon us in strange contrast. But she was not to be left. It was a season when we seemed, like Abraham, to receive as long as we asked. The first week in February, it was whispered among loving ones, that “our little Hannah knows that she is a sinner.” Now, that bright face was clouded, and tears well-nigh furrowed those fair cheeks. No smile played on those sweet features for a long week. When she smiled again, it was a heaven-lit smile ; for He who loves little children had taken possession of that young heart, and she loved Him, because He first

loved her. Strong was her love,—so strong, that it often seemed as if her soul would burst its clayey tabernacle and fly to the loving Shepherd. To her young companions she often expressed the desire to die, to go to Jesus. With strong feeling, and her eye raised heavenward, she would often say, “If I should die, then I should never *sin* any more.” She once came to her teacher with tearful eyes, saying, “It seems to me I cannot wait, I do so want to go to my Saviour.” At another time she said, “I am afraid I have sinned, in not being willing to wait till Jesus is ready to call me.” From that time, she seemed to seek to be willing to live, but her desire to leave this world would prevail.

She was in our school, the same lovely Christian, till June, 1847, when our summer vacation commenced. Before leaving, she put away, in a bag, a few little articles that she would not need at home. While sewing it up, she remarked to one of the girls by her side, “Perhaps *you* will open this. I do not think *I* shall ever open it. When you come together in the fall, I trust that I shall be in the Saviour’s school above.” She was then in perfect health, but the gentle Shepherd knew the desires of His little lamb, and she was soon to rest in His bosom.

In August, 1847, the cholera broke out in the

city of Oroomiah with fearful violence. It soon spread to the villages of the Plain, carrying many to their last home. Hannah, at this time, frequently remarked, "This may be my time to go to the dear Saviour." She said this to her mother, the last morning of her life. She went as usual, however, to the vineyard, where she had been daily occupied for weeks. About noon, not feeling quite well, she said to a little girl (one of her school companions) with her, "I am sick; perhaps I shall die soon." She was asked, "Are you willing to die?" With a smile she replied, "O yes; I am not afraid to go to Jesus." Her disease, rapid in its progress, soon assured her that she was near her home. To her young companion she now said, "I am very sick; I know I shall die soon. Shall we not pray together?" Her young friend committed her, as a dying one, to Him whom her soul loved. Her prayer closed, and she asked, "Now, Hannah, will you pray?" But, alas! their delightful seasons of prayer were ended. Hannah could pray with her no more. She faintly uttered, "Bless my dear sister. Take me gently through the dark river." Here, her voice failed, and she sunk down exhausted. Her friends were now sent for, and the happy dying one borne to her home. A mother bent over her only daughter, and three loving brothers over an only sister, but they

could not keep the spirit, drawn away by angel bands.

Soon after reaching the house, she asked that her companions might be sent for. They were soon at her side, to pray with their departing sister, and hear her speak to them of the blessed Saviour, "who," she said, "was her *all*, and to whom she still wished to go." The little group sat by her till the sun went down, catching each word that fell from her lips. Her last words to them were, "Love the Saviour, more than I have loved him."

She lingered during the night; and the morning of September 10, 1847, as we firmly believe, found her where she longed to be, with the risen Lamb, and where she would *sin no more*. Her precious dust was laid near that of blind Martha,—a sacred spot to many a lover of her dear Saviour.

When we heard of the death of "our little Hannah," we wept a few bitter tears, but our thoughts were soon turned upward, to behold *Sarah*, our first-born in the gospel from our Seminary — *Martha*, our dear blind child — and *Hannah*, the *lamb* of our flock, all safely home, waiting to receive their companions and teachers to eternal blessedness. Happy trio! First to be free from sin! We will dry our tears, for we hope soon to join you, to sin no more!



## MEERZA, THE MUSICIAN.

1. *Leucosia* (s. str.) *leucostoma* (L.)

## MEERZA, THE MUSICIAN.

BY REV. AUSTIN H. WRIGHT, M. D.

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THERE is no class of persons, among the Nestorians, more depraved and dissolute than professional musicians. They are called upon to take a part at weddings, and on festival occasions, among their own people, where drunkenness, revelry, and every form of iniquity, are practised. Their services are also in demand among the Mussulmâns, on similar occasions, and in assemblies of the loose and dissipated. Here, dancing boys, whose manners are indecent, are made to perform, and musicians are called upon to sing obscene songs. Nestorian musicians are thus trained in the very school of Satan himself.

One of this class was Meerza, the subject of this notice. He resided in the city of Oroomiah, and was exposed to the worst influences of the place, as

well as of his class. His house being near the mission premises, he was in the habit of occasionally attending our religious services, like many other wicked men of the Nestorians, whether from mere curiosity, or a conscience ill at ease, we know not.

During the winter of 1845-46, when the first extensive revival in Oroomiah occurred, Meerza became a regular attendant on the preaching of the word, and a deeply interested listener to the truth. Meetings were held during the winter evenings, in different houses in the Nestorian quarter of the city, where he was invariably found. He then became a changed man, as we have every reason to believe, though we have no record of the process through which his mind passed. He abandoned his profession, without having any other means for support for himself and family. This act alone, in the circumstances, was a most convincing proof of a remarkable change in him. He was opposed and ridiculed by his former companions and neighbors. He was a very poor man, and had a wife and several small children dependent upon him. His constitution was also weak.

Meerza trusted in the Lord, and was not left to hunger. He obtained such employment as he could find as a common day-laborer, and such as in his feeble health he could perform. He occasionally

carried proof-sheets from our mission press in the city to Seir, and the different families of the mission favored him with a light job of work from time to time. Though he was obliged to struggle with abject poverty, he never showed any inclination to return to his former profession. On the contrary, he met the trials arising from his poverty with cheerfulness. Once, when laughed at for giving up his profession and means of support, he said, "Let God take from me even this coat now on my back, I will not care, if He will only grant me a place in his kingdom."

Meerza always sought the companionship of those who loved the Lord, and desired to do his will. He appeared to be indeed a new man in Christ Jesus. His habits, his companions, his conversation, his whole life were new; and it was now observed by all who were acquainted with him.

When not at work, Meerza used to go into the school, in a Nestorian quarter of the city, and there he learned to read. A small copy of the four Gospels was his constant companion. This was often seen in his hand, when going from place to place. A neighbor of his testifies, "Wherever I went in the neighborhood, I used to find Meerza with his little red book, now in one house and now in another, reading and explaining the Scriptures to

the family. Often, on going to the church, I found him sitting on a grave-stone in the church-yard, reading his beloved book."

In the fall of 1847, about a year and a half from the time of his hopeful conversion, Meerza was employed to perform miscellaneous service in connection with the Female Seminary. He made the necessary purchases for the school in the market; and it was observed, that daily, on his return, he retired to his closet to pray, probably feeling the need of divine aid after coming thus in contact with the world.

Meerza spent his leisure time in the Seminary, reading the Scriptures. His whole heart seemed interested in spiritual things, and he grew rapidly in grace and knowledge and ripeness for heaven. He was diligent in embracing opportunities to speak to his friends about the salvation of their souls.

For some years Meerza had been subject to a disease of the lungs, which rendered him a very feeble man. In December of this year, 1847, the disease assumed the form of active inflammation. One morning I was told that he was ill, and was requested to visit him. I hastened to his house, and, to my surprise, found him in great suffering, and even then struggling with death.

He could only express his submission to the will of God. He was gasping for breath. I ran home to obtain some palliative medicine, which I carried to him immediately. He soon breathed his last. He was about forty years of age.

A few hours before his death his friends were weeping around him. He told them not to weep for him, adding, "I have a place of joy to which I am going."

His little copy of the gospels he had left in one of the rooms of the Female Seminary, on the mission premises. He called his son—a small boy—told him where it was, and committed it to him with the request that he would keep it and read it when he was gone.

Meerza's remains were committed to the sepulchre of his fathers, in the yard of Saint Mary's Church, in the city, where the remains of Mrs. Grant and quite a group of the children of our mission lie, waiting for the morning of the resurrection.

Meerza left a wife and several small children. After his conversion, he prayed for them, and endeavored to bring them to Christ, but with no apparent effect at the time. But prayer and labor are not in vain. Sooner or later the results

appear. His wife was a wicked, profane woman, confident that she was safe for heaven as long as she observed the fasts and other forms of the Nestorian church. She, however, occasionally attended the religious services on the mission premises, and heard the gospel preached. In 1851 she became much interested, and was seldom absent from her place on the Sabbath at our preaching service, and in the Sabbath School. She not only came herself, but she was surrounded by her little group of fatherless children, as well clad and as tidy as she, in her poverty, could make them. She was also in the habit of gathering them around her at her humble abode, for family prayers. She was led to trust in her husband's God. She struggled with deep poverty. Not unfrequently she had no bread in her house to give her hungry children. The Lord, however, remembered them in their want. He put it into the heart of kind friends to send them supplies, which often arrived at the hour of their greatest need. She gave delightful evidence of being a child of God, and day by day advanced in the divine life.

In the summer of 1852, that fearful disease, which has so often visited Oroomiah within the last few years, the Asiatic cholera, broke out in

the city. It first appeared in a remote part of the town, but gradually approached the Nestorian quarter. Meerza's wife, as is the custom of Nestorian women in the summer, went out one day to weed in one of the many gardens that surround the city, for which labor she was paid a trifle by the owner of the garden. At evening she returned home, and, having no bread in the house for supper, she prepared the dough, and commenced baking it, as is the custom of the country, sheet by sheet, in an oven called a *tanoora*, made in the ground. She had nearly finished—two or three sheets of bread only remained in the *tanoora*—when she was suddenly seized with the cholera. None of her pious friends knew of her illness until the next morning, and then she was so low that she was speechless, and perhaps unconscious. Consequently nothing is known of her experience, as she approached the borders of Jordan. She struggled with the disease till about noon of that day, when she closed her eyes in death.

A few days after her death occurred the visit of the estimable Colonel (now General) Williams at Oroomiah, the British Commissioner for settling the Turco-Persian boundary. And in his generous benefaction, on the part of his philan-

thropic government, of nearly seventy dollars, placed in the hands of our mission to be distributed among orphans, made such by the cholera, the desolate children of this pious widow, so suddenly left motherless as well as fatherless, shared in common with many others of all classes. Their relief, from such a bounty, was as naturally as gratefully regarded by the suffering ones as from the hand of Him who remembereth the widow and orphan in their affliction, and giveth food "to the young ravens when they cry."

P R I E S T   S H A L E E T A .



## PRIEST SHALEETA.

BY REV. JUSTIN PERKINS, D. D.

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THE subject of this sketch was the priest of Ardishai and Takky, two Nestorian villages in near proximity to each other, about fifteen miles south-east of the city of Oroomiah. The two contain at least fifteen hundred inhabitants; and he had charge also of several smaller villages in that neighborhood. He was about thirty years old when our mission was commenced, and was well known as a very active, vigorous man; kind, generous, and very hospitable; but like too many of the Nestorian clergy of that period, *given to much wine*.

The life of priest Shaleeta, previous to that time, had been one of more or less adventure. In his youth, he entered the service of Prince Malek Kasem Meerza, who was then governor of Oroomiah; and when that prince was driven from his post, by the

advance of a Russian army on Oroomiah, in 1828, Shaleeta fled with him to Tehrân. On the young Nestorian's return to Oroomiah, some time afterwards, he brought intelligence that an Affshar Khân, of this province, high in military command, was superseded by a rival at the capital. The Khân enraged by the evil tidings, seized the unfortunate bearer of them and cast him into prison, declaring that he should be beheaded the next morning.

Stunned with terror, young Shaleeta acceded to the proposal, tendered to him by a Moollah, to accept the religion of Mohammed, and thus save his head,—that measure, in the eye of Mussulman law, always atoning for any offence, alleged or real, on the part of a nominal Christian. An elder brother of Shaleeta, hearing of his sad predicament and desperate purpose, at this juncture, made his way to the prison, by night, and, through the interest or the connivance of the keepers, rescued the sufferer. By means of temporary concealment, and probably also from the impression that he might find a powerful protector in Prince Malek Kasem Meerza, his former patron, well known as a friend of the Christians. Shaleeta was never afterwards molested by the Mohammedans, for having left his profession of Islamism within the walls of his prison.

During a few of the early years of our mission, Priest Shaleeta, ignorant and superstitious, like the mass of the Nestorian clergy, was more bigoted than many of them; and under the well-grounded apprehension that the tendency of our evangelical labors would be to weaken the attachment of the people to their dead, empty forms, he seemed disposed to keep aloof from us. The influence of his fickle, unworthy bishop, Mar Gabriel, was such as only to encourage him in that line of policy.

At length, however, observing in his early friend, priest Abraham, who was one of the first helpers of our mission, a change of character and appearance so striking, from habits like his own, of hard-drinking, profaneness, etc., to strict sobriety, a humble walk and conversation, and persevering zeal, in the face of opposition and discouragement, in efforts to make known the way of salvation to perishing men, priest Shaleeta's attention was strongly arrested, and the more he examined the subject the clearer was his conviction, that such beneficial changes could be the fruit of no bad tree. He thus gradually came round, from wary apprehension, to a correct appreciation and hearty approval of our object and labors. A corresponding change at length appeared also in his habits and character. He abandoned his cups, and became active in his

efforts to instruct and enlighten his people. The example and influence of his irreligious bishop was always a discouraging barrier in his pathway of reform; but he was still zealous, fearless, and persevering, notwithstanding the Episcopal menaces which he frequently had to encounter.

For some two years after this pleasing change appeared in the views and external character of priest Shaleeta, there was still not satisfactory evidence that he had passed from death unto life. He seemed to be near the kingdom of heaven, but we feared that he had not entered it. While in this state, the cholera appeared in his village, in the autumn of 1847, and priest Shaleeta was one of the first individuals seized by that fearful malady. The attack was so sudden and unexpected, that it almost overwhelmed him. As he was walking across the room, unconscious of impending evil, excruciating spasms instantly clenched his limbs, and he fell to the ground. Dreadful as were his bodily sufferings, during the two or three succeeding days, the anguish of his soul was yet far more awful. He now felt that his day of death had come, while the great business of life had not been accomplished, nor even begun. His sins were set in appalling array before him; and the stern claims of justice thundered terrifically in his ears. His external refor-

tion, the previous years, and his efforts to advance the cause of Christ during that period, now appeared to him about as loathsome as his former immoralities, so much of self-righteousness was there mingled in that formal reformation. He now saw himself, for the first time, an utterly lost sinner, and Christ the all-sufficient and only Saviour of such sinners. He earnestly cried to God for mercy to his needy soul, in this distressing extremity,— asking also for yet a little span of life, in which to warn his dying flock, whose blood, he felt, would be found in his guilty skirts at the day of judgment. God heard his prayer, granting him pardon, and restoration to health. And the remaining two years of his life well attested the sincerity of his self-consecration to Christ, in that dreadful struggle, under the iron grasp of an awful disease, and yet more terrible stings of an accusing conscience, awakened and armed by the Spirit's power.

The writer of this sketch spent a Sabbath at Ardishai, soon after this momentous epoch in the life of priest Shaleeta; and he can never forget the deep solemnity of the priest's appearance, as he entered the village church on that Sabbath, nor the tender, melting pathos, with which he related the dealings of God with him, during the few previous days. His peace was now like a river, and

his heart and his face were set as a flint on spending and being spent, thenceforth, in unremitting efforts for the salvation of his people, regardless alike of the jeers of the wicked, the indifference of the careless, and the frowns of his worldly bishop.

During the rest of priest Shaleeta's life, these high and holy purposes, formed at the hour of conversion, were not unredeemed. Much of the time he held religious meetings at his house, every evening, when he was at home. Often, during the day, and sometimes at night, he was abroad in neighboring villages, proclaiming Christ and Him crucified, as the only Saviour of lost sinners. His attainments as a scholar were very limited; but his talents were of a high order, and he had become quite familiar with the four gospels; while the sovereign virtue of Christ's atoning sacrifice to cleanse and save the guilty soul, had been well learned by him at the foot of the bleeding cross.

The wily Papal emissaries, who often crossed his track, as they prowled among his villages, had special occasion to remember him. They found it exceedingly difficult to resist or gainsay the point and power with which he spake. They and their adherents, when "cut to the heart," sometimes "gnashed on him with their teeth," and "cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears;" but they

could neither silence nor intimidate him. Among the dreadful epithets which some of the Papists applied to priest Shaleeta was that of "Satan." They declared it impossible for any mortal so to confound his learned French adversaries, by simply wielding the sword of the Spirit, unless he were in actual league with the devil.

Some of my latest recollections of priest Shaleeta are associated with my journey to Mosul, in company with Mr. Stocking and several of our native helpers. The first night, on that journey, are passed with the priest at his village. The incident is thus recorded in my journal of that period:—

"April 25, 1849, we rode to Takky, a Nestorian village near Ardishai, and stopped for the night with priest Shaleeta, who had accompanied us from the city. In the evening a congregation assembled at the dwelling of priest Shaleeta, who is a zealous, good man, and often preaches to such congregations in his own house, and with very happy effect on the mass of his village. Deacon Tamo preached on this occasion from the text, 'Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead,' etc. At the close, Mar Yohannan addressed some pointed remarks to his Episcopal colleague, Mar Gabriel, on their responsibilities as bishops. Mar Gabriel had been with us at our evening meal, and seemed very kindly dis-

posed toward us; but we have reason to fear that he profits little by what is said to him on the subject of religion."

Priest Shaleeta had manifested a very deep interest in the revival in our seminaries that year, and had been much encouraged by hopeful appearances in his village.

Ever ready to go anywhere, and do any thing whereby he might advance the cause of Christ, priest Shaleeta now volunteered to accompany us, so much of the way as we should desire, being well acquainted with the nearer districts through which we were to pass, and which were more or less insecure, in consequence of the death of the former king, which occurred not long before,—an event which is always a signal for the bloody Koords to sally down from their wild mountains and ravage the plains of Persia. We gladly accepted his offer, and he accompanied us as far as Saoujboolak, about seventy or eighty miles distant from Oroomiah. On his more leisurely return, he was to visit the scattered Nestorians, in that and the nearer district of Sooldooz, who were as sheep without a shepherd, and preach to them the gospel.

Mar Gabriel accompanied us two or three miles on the way. On reaching the Barandooz river, now swelling in its spring flood, he dashed through the

stream with his characteristic boyishness, the water reaching nearly to his horse's back, while the rest of us went a few rods further, and crossed on the bridge. When Mar Gabriel took his leave of us to return home, priest Shaleeta said deferentially to him, "Now, bishop, I commit my flock to your care, while I am absent; I hope you will look after them; will you not?" "*Certainly,*" replied the bishop, with his own peculiar air of listless indifference, "*if any of them die, I will bury them.*" Priest Shaleeta was saddened by that reply, which he well understood and deeply-felt, and after the bishop had gone, he said to us with a sigh, "*That is Mar Gabriel;* little does he care for the souls of his people while they live; when they die, he is ready to bury them, as though that were the sum of his duty to them."

On the plain of Sooldooz, we found its river, the Jedder, which is ordinarily only about one hundred and fifty feet wide, now overflowing all its banks, and spreading itself like a sea, from the melting snow, on the higher ranges of the Koordish mountains, and from the copious rain that was falling. There was no bridge; and that was the place and the time for priest Shaleeta to display his characteristic energy and prompt devotion in the transportation of our baggage across the swollen stream. Divesting himself of most of his clothing, cold as

was the weather and the water, and mounting one of the strongest horses in the company, he took separate parcels, tents, beds, etc., upon his shoulder, fearlessly crossing and recrossing the deep and rapid river many times, till, with the aid of two or three athletic villagers, who carried some parcels on their heads, all were at length safe over.

At Saoujboolak, priest Shaleeta engaged very zealously in the work of preaching to the scattered Nestorians and Armenians whom he could find there, the few days we were detained at that town for a caravan to Mosul. There we parted with the good man, the writer for the last time on earth, yet neither of us thinking that our next meeting would be beyond the Jordan of death.

Priest Shaleeta, feeling deeply the weight of his responsibility for the souls of the thousands of Nestorians on the part of the Plain where he resided, who had no one but himself to care for them, had for some time importuned our mission to locate priest Abraham, in whom he had more confidence than in himself, in Ardishai, to share with him in his labors. Priest Abraham, who had labored in that village for weeks, and in some cases for months at a time, was pleased with the proposal, and at length removed his family and settled there. But, alas, he went to Ardishai to be priest Shaleeta's suc-

*cessor* rather than his *colleague*. Hardly had he settled in the village, in the autumn of 1849, when priest Shaleeta was seized by typhus fever, of which he died after a sickness of twelve days, cut down in the full vigor of manhood, being about fifty years old.

The king of terrors did not now surprise him, but found him ready for the summons,—far different from the condition in which the cholera found him two years before. In the early part of his sickness, priest Abraham often conversed and prayed with him. He spoke tenderly and prayed fervently himself, expressing entire willingness to die, having an unwavering confidence in Christ as his Saviour, though deeply impressed with his great personal unworthiness. As the disease advanced, reason was dethroned, as is commonly the case in that fearful malady, and the good man thus sunk silently and gently into the embrace of death, and awoke, we doubt not, in the light of a blessed immortality.

Priest Shaleeta was very deeply lamented by his family and flock, and by our mission, and especially by priest Abraham, whom the Lord had in his good providence placed by his side, only just in time to aid him in leaning implicitly on the rod and the staff of the good Shepherd while crossing the cold

river of death, and stand in the mournful breach which his removal left in those villages.

The good seed sown by priest Shaleeta has not been lost nor forgotten. His only son, who, it was long the father's earnest prayer, might become a preacher, now eighteen years old, is hopefully pious, and one of the most talented and promising pupils of our Seminary; and the work of the Lord is graciously prospered in those villages, under the faithful labors of priest Abraham.

M E K H I E L,  
SON OF PRIEST DUNKHA.



## MEKHIEL, SON OF PRIEST DUNKHA.

BY REV. GEORGE W. COAN.

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MEKHIEL, (or Michael,) the subject of the following sketch, to use the language of his father, "was born on Thursday, in Mardootta Nochea, Koordistan, in the month of *roses* (June), 1836." He was the son of priest Dunkha, a name long since familiar to the readers of the Missionary Herald, as a valued helper, in the employ of the missionaries at Oroomiah.

The priest was originally from the district of Tiary, whence the family, consisting of the priest's father and two brothers, with their wives and children, removed to Nochea. This name,— Nochea,— signifies, in the Koordish language, *among mountains*, and is given to a peculiarly wild, rugged, mountainous district, lying west of Oroomiah, on the borders of Persia and Turkey. Its jagged

peaks pierce the clouds, and its snows glisten in the sun till midsummer, and, in some places, during the whole year, the range appearing in very sublime relief as seen from the Plain of Oroomiah. Down among its deep glens and gorges, and on the banks of its dashing streams, and perched high up its almost precipitous mountain slopes, are nestled several Nestorian villages. Here the poor Christians, having fled from the cruel persecutions of the bloody Timourlane, have, for centuries, pastured their flocks, and tilled their scanty patches of earth for a livelihood. But even here, the cruel Koord has found them out, and subjected them to numberless wrongs and insults, plundering them of their scanty stores, and driving off their flocks. Being a border district, these plundering desperadoes have ravaged and sacked the Nestorian villages with impunity, now escaping into Turkey, and now into Persia, as they were pursued from either side. It was in this district that a member of our Mission, Rev. J. G. Cochran, was recently plundered, and his life jeopardized.

Stripped of his little earthly all, priest Dunkha fled from Nochea to the Plain of Gawar, the distance of a day's journey. The family passed a few years in Memikân, the village at present oc-

cupied by the station of our mission among the mountain Nestorians. But even here, the few hamlets of Nestorians, hemmed in as they are by the everlasting mountains, many of whose summits are covered with eternal snows, were insecure from the attacks and the relentless grasp of Koordish banditti, who even in midwinter roamed over the Plain on snow-shoes, in quest of prey. Greenland cold and Siberian snows deterred them not from plundering villages, burning houses, and turning the poor inmates out of their homes, defenceless, and exposed to the pitiless storms that sweep down from the mountains with dreadful fury. Again did the priest flee with his family back to Nochea, only to be the subject of repeated calamities. Seven times has he been stripped of his property by Koords, who consider the *dogs*, as they term Christians, their lawful prey.

The houses of these high mountain districts are half underground, and of the rudest construction, being made of cobble stones laid up against the slanting sides of the cellar, which is excavated, and covered with a conical roof, with a hole in the centre for the ingress of light and egress of smoke.

Into these houses are huddled grandparents,

parents, and children, to the third and fourth generation. Each son, upon marriage, brings home his wife, and thus adds to the number in the hive.

Into these houses, or rather hovels, are also driven the cattle and flocks of the family; while all the implements of husbandry,—ploughs, harrows, threshing instruments, cartwheels, etc., etc.,—are bestowed under the same roof, as best they can be, for safe-keeping. The part occupied as a stable is so arranged that the cattle all stand facing a *decana*, or raised place in the centre, which is occupied by the family, in winter as their sleeping apartment, and general place of sitting. In these *decanas* the people pass their long winters in smoking their pipes, feeding their flocks and cattle, and retailing gossip. Owing to the severity of the climate, and the almost utter absence of wood, the animal heat of their herds is made to supply the place of fuel, except for the bare purpose of cooking once a day, for which sun-baked manure is used. In the part of the house where cooking is done, and the provisions are stored, it is not uncommon to find calves and sheep tied up, and poultry running about, while sick persons, lying amidst all the filth of such a

place, are mingling their groans with the lowing of kine, the bleating of sheep, and the cackling of hens.

It not unfrequently happens, also, that their buffaloes break loose and fight furiously ; and sometimes, in their blind rage, they knock down the posts on which the roof rests, and thus bury themselves and all about them in one common ruin. It was in Memikân that an uncle of priest Dunkha was thus killed by the falling in of a roof.

Such was the native country and the home of Mekhiel.

Priest Dunkha's father was strongly averse to his son's becoming a *reader*. He rather wished him to be a shepherd. The Nestorians, in common with their neighbors, the Mussulmans, have long had the idea, (though now, owing to the increase of light, it is coming to be repudiated,) that a man, to be a reader, must renounce all other employment, and gain his livelihood by his book knowledge. That consisted in being able to read the ancient Syriac Scriptures, and the liturgy of the Nestorian church, though it did not necessarily include the idea of translating it into the modern tongue, by which the poor might understand the sacred oracles and the church service. The people have supposed that a man can do but

one thing in this world. Each has his calling, and must live by that; and generally the son has followed the occupation of the father, from time immemorial.

All readers were ecclesiastics. They were expected to attend to the concerns of religion for the illiterate, read prayers for them, etc., etc., while they in turn furnished their teachers with bread, and considered themselves free from further responsibility to attend to their own souls, having committed this business all over to the hands of their priest. But the curacy of a Nestorian ecclesiastic was not very lucrative, and the bread was not always forthcoming. Hence the aversion of priest Dunkha's father to his son's learning to read, notwithstanding all his earnest entreaties.

A brother of priest Dunkha's father, who lived in the same house, was a priest and a very godly man, truly evangelical, far in advance of all about him in the knowledge of spiritual things,—one of the few, who, previous to the coming of the missionary, had sighed for a brighter day to dawn upon his people, and who, we have good reason to believe, had saving faith in the Lord Jesus. Driven down from the mountains by fear of the Koords, in 1835, he was two weeks the

guest of Mr. Perkins and Dr. Grant, during the first winter of their residence at Oroomiah, to their no small gratification.

The praise of this priest, Solomon, now long since dead, was, and still is, in the mouth of all who knew him, as one *so* learned, *so* meek, *so* humble, *so* prayerful, and *so* full of evangelical sentiment and teaching. When the missionaries first went to Memikân, in Gawar, to reside, they were told, “ You have come to a hard place ; the holy priest, Solomon, preached to us, and tried to disciple us, and not one of us repented, and so will all your efforts among us be fruitless.”

This priest taught his little nephew, Dunkha, his alphabet, and helped him on in his studies, as much as he could without his father’s knowledge. Thus did this poor shepherd boy, in the wilds of Koordistan, sigh and struggle to make himself acquainted with the Bible, trembling under the apprehension of his father’s displeasure, while he carefully concealed his Psalter under his garments, as he led his flocks away over the mountains to pasture. He eventually became quite learned for a rude Nestorian, and was successively made deacon, priest, and archdeacon.

A few months after the missionaries arrived at Oroomiah, Mr. Perkins sent priest Abraham, of

Geog Tapa, and a Nestorian deacon to the mountains, to obtain from thence an ecclesiastic, to assist him in reducing the modern Syriac to writing, and in the translation of the Scriptures. The readers of those mysterious "mountains" then had a high reputation, on the Plain of Oroomiah, for their *great learning*; besides, there was real advantage in uniting the labors of a translator from the mountains with one on the Plain, to harmonize, so far as practicable, the different dialects in the first reduction of the language to a written form. The messengers were charged to obtain "the most learned" priest they could find. They boldly set off on foot—entered the formidable mountains and penetrated as far as Marbeshoo, a large village in a secluded glen, forty miles west of the Plain of Oroomiah. It was a fearful journey, at that period; though now often made in a single day, with entire security, by the missionaries and their helpers. At Marbeshoo, they found priest Dunkha, who had come down to that place from his more distant home on business. His fame, as a *very learned man*, was already known to the messengers, and they at once engaged him to return with them to Oroomiah. A week after they left the missionary, they introduced to his study priest Dunkha, who, though grotesquely clad in wild

Koordish costume, struck him as a very pleasant man, about thirty years old, and a decidedly hopeful candidate for a future helper.

Under the instruction of the missionaries, priest Dunkha learned the way of truth and life by Jesus Christ more perfectly, and became hopefully a subject of renewing grace. He had married an excellent, strong-minded woman, whose meekness and prayerfulness, united with her good-sense, distinguished her from the mass of her countrywomen, and commanded for her their respect and love.

Such were the parents of Mekhiel. His mother died when he was but three years old, and while his father was absent in Oroomiah. He was thus deprived of her counsels and prayers, and left, at this tender age, without a mother's care and love. When the priest returned home, his stricken heart was made to bleed afresh, as little Mekhiel came and threw himself in his bosom, sobbing and crying, "My father, where is my mother?" While with quivering lips he could only say, "Your mother is dead;" and then Mekhiel would burst out afresh with piteous cries, and moan with inconsolable grief. Although so young when his mother died, he never seemed to forget her, but as he grew up, would pass hours on the flat roof with his only

sister who was older than he, talking and inquiring about his dear mother.

Priest Dunkha eventually brought his whole family down to Oroomiah, where they remained during the winters, the father engaged in the work of translating the Bible and copying for the press, and the children attending school, while they returned to their cool mountain home to spend their summers.

Mekhiel was an uncommonly sprightly, active boy, very mischievous and excessively fond of play, in which he displayed a good deal of ingenuity. Now he was a *mason*, with his companions about him to bring stones and mortar, as he built his mountain forts and castles, in imitation of those frowning structures which he had seen in Koordistan. Now he was a carpenter, making various little articles of the trade from bits of boards he picked up. His activity was incessant, and he did with his might and thoroughly whatsoever his hand found to do. He attended one of our village schools a while; but his sister, Sanum, (since a graduate of the Female Seminary, and the wife of one of our out-station preachers,) who loved her little brother very tenderly, used to devote a great deal of time to him in teaching him to read; so that at

the early age of eight years, he had acquired a pretty good knowledge of his New Testament.

About this time, his father started, with his family, for their home in the mountains. They had proceeded but a few hours on their way, up one of the gorges which run down to the Plain of Oroomiah, when they were attacked by a party of plundering Koords. They had seated themselves by a spring of water, and were eating their humble repast of bread and cheese, when one of the banditti appeared and halted near them. Mekiel said, "Father, who is this man? Perhaps he is hungry; give him something to eat." "My son," said the experienced father, "he indeed is hungry, but bread will not satisfy him; he has come to rob us; but do not be afraid; he will not kill us." But the priest, at the instance of his son, offered the man bread. He took it, but hurled it back, and snatching the priest's turban, galloped off to call his comrades, who soon appeared and fell to stripping the defenceless party of nearly all they had. While they were taking off the priest's coat, little Mekhiel cried out, "My father, give them your cloak too, according to the word of our Lord, 'if any man will take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.'"

Mekhiel was naturally very bright and mature

for one of his years. He was on this account admitted to the privileges of the Male Seminary earlier than many, being but nine years old.

The first four years that he was in the Seminary, he did not apply himself to his studies with that assiduity his teachers desired, although no one in the school was more capable of getting long and difficult lessons. He carried his playfulness and mischievousness with him to the school, and by his general carelessness, on the subject of religion, became a great grief to his teachers. In the revival of 1846, he manifested some feeling, and encouraged the hope that prayer for him would be heard; but his impressions proved evanescent as the early dew. He, however, was more studious the following years that he was in the Seminary. He was a good scholar in the Ancient Syriac, and in Hebrew. He read English, and studied arithmetic and geography. He also had a great taste for beautiful and ornamental writing, in which he excelled.

But it was painful to see him, while he was increasing in knowledge, increasing also in his hatred of God and all that was good and holy. He became very hardened, and made a mock at sin, and scoffed at religious things, and ridiculed his companions for their seriousness in times of unusual religious interest. He would sometimes feign religious feeling,

and appear to be deeply affected, and afterward make sport of his mockery. This he did particularly in the revival of 1849. In the following winter, God again visited the two Seminaries with the gracious outpouring of his Spirit, and a powerful work of grace was in delightful progress; but Mekhiel seemed unmoved. He was often made the subject of special prayer, and his sister, then an assistant pupil in the Female Seminary, was in an agony of spirit on his account, to whose strong crying and tears the writer can bear witness. She dreaded to make inquiries concerning him, fearing that she should only learn that he was hardening himself in sin, and that while others were taken he would be left. But God at length heard the prayers of that pious sister. Deep solemnity pervaded the Seminaries, and one after another began to rejoice in hope. Several young men in the Male Seminary petitioned the teachers for a day of fasting and prayer. The teachers hesitated a little, but concluded to submit the question to the whole school. All who wished the day for such purposes, and who promised scrupulously thus to observe it, were requested to rise. Among the number who rose was Mekhiel. We did not expect to see him get up, and considered this step as indicating more feeling than we had attributed to him. We felt encouraged to pray that

God would deepen conviction in his soul. But how were these hopes soon dashed to the ground, though not long.

As the preacher, Mr. Perkins, entered the school-room, a little before the public service in the afternoon, he observed Mekhiel, idly amusing himself by drawing pictures and writing on his slate. He stepped up to him and said, "Mekhiel, do you remember who lied to the Holy Ghost and straight-way fell down dead?" The word was a nail in a sure place. Mekhiel said nothing, but tremblingly arose and left the room. He did not return to the meeting, but his shrill voice was heard almost constantly at prayer all that afternoon, down in a prayer closet back of the Seminary, earnestly wrestling with God as for his life. Indeed, his eternal life seemed suspended on that passing hour. He wrestled not *alone* with the angel of the covenant. Others bowed their heads in their seats during the sermon, and seemed intent on the salvation of Mekhiel. He did not dare leave his closet an enemy to God, but made an affectionate commitment of his soul to an all-sufficient Saviour.

The change in him was very great, and remarked by all. He was young,—thirteen years old; but he had served Satan faithfully; and he now entered into the service of his Master with corresponding

zeal. He wrote to his father and his sister who were at the city, on the morning after his change, telling them what God had done for his soul. Sanum was overjoyed at the happy intelligence. Now Mekhiel had become a brother indeed to her. Now she would have a companion in her studies, and in her reading, and he would pray with her and help her in her Christian course. His note found his father copying the first book of Samuel for the press. He says, "May peace be multiplied to you, my dear father. O my father, let me entreat you to lay aside this work, arise and take your Testament, and preach to lost souls. Lift up your eyes and see that the harvest is great and the laborers are few. The field is already white to the harvest."

The religious interest extended to some of the villages, and Mekhiel now being alive to the worth of the soul, and its imminent danger, felt that his father should engage in more direct labors for his dying fellow countrymen. In the spirit of the genuine convert, he wanted all to come to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. First his heart yearned for his kindred and friends, then for his people, then for the benighted heathen. He even early expressed a determination to go as a *missionary to Japan*, should the way be open for him. He said he thought Japan would be open for the missiona-

ries of the cross by the time he should be ready to go.

During the remainder of the term, Mekhiel applied himself to his studies with great assiduity, and made rapid progress; but God saw fit soon to transfer him to the school above, and another sphere of usefulness than the one he had marked out for himself. He had been five years in the Seminary. Five months remained of his brief course on earth, but these were months of rapid growth in grace and meetness for heaven. The few remaining weeks of the term he was very docile, humble, and prayerful. It was delightful to see what progress he made in spiritual attainments under the teachings of the Holy Ghost.

During this time his health began to fail, but he continued his studies till the vacation, when, in walking home six miles, some of the way through deep snow, he became exhausted and took a severe cold, which aggravated his disease and hastened his early death. He had looked forward to the vacation with no ordinary feelings. He had left the paternal roof, an enemy of the cross of Christ,—a hardened, wicked youth,—a careless, ungrateful sinner. He returned, a lover of Jesus,—meek, penitent, believing, prayerful. With what ecstasy did that sister, who had not ceased to pray for him for years, clasp

him in her arms! Now he was a brother indeed. How melting were their seasons of prayer, as they now poured out their full hearts to God in praise and thanksgiving,—she, that God had heard her petitions for him,—and he, that he had been snatched as a brand from the burning. Heretofore, she had taken him away, almost against his will, and prayed with and for him, with not less than maternal tenderness and fidelity. Now he loved the same Saviour she loved, and was inspired with the same glorious hopes and anticipations.

This sister, not long after Mekhiel's death, prepared a short account of his last days for the “Rays of Light,” which I cannot do better than transcribe, introducing some things which I afterward heard her relate.

“From the commencement of the term at Seir, he was very different from what he had formerly been, more studious and sober, less playful and mischievous. It was during this term, that the Holy Spirit descended on wings of love and hovered over the school. The gates of Zion were open to receive the sin-wearied pilgrim. I would hear that his companions were striving to enter in at the strait gate, and was very anxious to hear if he might be of the number; but my heart trembled, and my bones shook from fear, that perhaps they would tell me

‘No.’ My desire and constant prayer was, that he might become one of the Saviour’s flock. I had little confidence in my own weak prayers, but hoped that others might prevail, who also prayed that he might become one of Christ’s members. Their prayers were heard, and I have strong evidence that he was washed in the fountain that flowed from Immanuel’s side. Yes; his last was no counterfeit awakening for sin, as many of us show, but it was thorough. With all his heart he took leave of his ungodly companions and the perishing pleasures of sin, and set out a whole-souled pilgrim for the New Jerusalem. The day his teachers told me of the wonderful change the Lord had wrought in my brother, it was impossible for me to express the joy and delight of my heart, while with tears of gratitude I attempted to praise the Lord for his boundless love. O how sweet were my thoughts that hour! I hoped I should see him a bold soldier of the cross,— that he would preach the gospel of peace to those sitting in the region and shadow of death,— and that his beautiful feet would climb the mountains to proclaim a Saviour to lost souls there. But that Saviour saw that it was time for him to praise him above. While he was engaged in his studies, he gave his whole thoughts to them, and every one thought that he would become a ripe

scholar and be very useful in the vineyard of the Lord. But he suddenly sickened, and our fond hopes were destined to be blasted.

“ His sickness (disease of the heart) was somewhat protracted. Oh, if I forget every thing else, I can never forget those ardent prayers, and those tears of my brother, who, during those months of sickness, used to pray with me. The burden of his prayer was, that God would prepare him for the great change that awaited him. I used to say to him, ‘ I hope, dear brother, we shall be permitted to pray together a great while yet,’ — little thinking that his strong wrestlings at the mercy-seat were drawing him nearer and nearer to heaven, and fast fitting him to leave me.

“ At the opening of the term in the spring, we could not persuade him to remain at home. He would say, ‘ I am not very sick; I must return with my class mates; I shall be left behind.’ He went and studied a while, but strong disease was gnawing at his heartstrings and wasting away his flesh, so that he was obliged to leave his studies upon which he had so much set his heart, and take a final leave of his dear teachers and beloved school companions, and come home and show us how a Christian can die.

“ When I heard that they had brought him home, I went to see him. I found him reading his Hebrew

Bible, which lay open before him. As I looked upon his pale face and wasted form, my heart fainted in me, and I trembled from fear that he would be taken from me. I snatched his book from him, and told him he must not read when he was so sick. He entreated me, saying, 'Do let me read a little more. Alas! how have I neglected this blessed book! If I should live, I feel as if I should wish to read no other book except the Bible.'

"His disease continued its wasting ravages for four months; but he never murmured nor complained. He did not, in all this time, give as much trouble as some would have done in a single day. It was not because he did not suffer exerueiating pain at times. I never saw one suffer more. But he would say, 'I remember the dreadful anguish and suffering of my Saviour on Golgotha for me, and this comforts me.' The Christian graces, in most conspicuous and lively exercise in him, were these: his meekness, his patience, and his obedience. Although the hand of God was heavy upon him, he was silent and meek, as was his Lord. He did not sigh, nor murmur, nor beeome impatient, but peace, the peace of his Saviour, filled his soul. All who saw his face, radiant with holy peace and joy, gave glory to God, while they would say to him, 'You are more blessed than we.'

“With a bleeding heart and streaming eyes I would ask him if he felt ready and willing to die. His invariable answer was, ‘Yes, I am not afraid of death. I want to die, if such be the will of the Lord.’ Often would he remonstrate with us for our sorrow and weeping on his account. He would say, ‘The Lord is doing this. Let me die now if such is his will. Do not weep for me.’ Sometimes a cloud of sorrow would darken his brow, and he would say, ‘How sadly have I neglected my Bible, and how little have I obeyed its blessed precepts; how far short have I come of my duty. If it might please the Lord to raise me up, how differently would I live!’ But quickly did the loving countenance of the Saviour beam upon him, driving away the clouds and filling his soul with holy joy. He was particularly alive to the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and was greatly distressed whenever he heard profaneness or people quarrelling. He would entreat them not to do so wickedly, and would say, ‘You greatly afflict me; you fill my heart with sorrow and grief by thus abusing my Saviour.’ If he saw his half brother and sister, who were quite young, playing on the Sabbath, he would be filled with grief, and beg me not to allow them thus to break the Sabbath day. He would call them to his bedside, and have them get a book and read to him, while he

talked to them about the sin of Sabbath-breaking, and would say, 'I love what God loves, and hate what God hates.' I asked him if he prayed. He always replied, 'Yes, I cannot neglect my stated seasons of prayer, except when my pain is very great.'

"As his earthly tabernacle was being taken down, he appeared like a spirit, longing to soar away to be clothed upon with the perfect righteousness of Christ. As he drew near his end, his strength almost gone, every ten minutes or so he would faint, and then revive. He was so in haste to fly away and be with Christ in the New Jerusalem, and praise his Beloved in its celestial gates, that if all the world should try to hinder him, they could not. His old father, whose grief was almost inconsolable, asked him, 'Why do you leave me and go away?' He said, 'Trust in the Lord, my father; you will soon follow me, if you repent and believe.'"

Although his sister's heart was ready to burst with grief at the thought of her dear brother's death, yet would he say, "I desire to depart; I am weary, I am weary; I want to go to rest with Jesus." His sister said, "You shall go soon, but do not *hasten* away from us." He replied, "When, when shall I go?"

At one time, one of his teachers said to him,

"Would you rather live or die, Mekhiel?" He answered, "Oh, I wish to die, to go and be with Christ, if such be his will." When he was questioned about his own hope, he said, "I trust in Christ that my sins are forgiven. I am a poor sinner, but the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sins. I renounce all other hope. I cast myself on Christ. My trust is in the cross of Christ. There all my hopes hang; there I lie." When asked what message he wished to send to his companions, he replied, "Tell them this is the last message of their dying brother, that they forgive his numerous faults when with them, and repent themselves and believe in the Lord Jesus, and prepare to die."

"It was the morning watch. The death sweat was upon his brow. Death came with his chariot of love to convey him to the skies. Although for others, death's sting may be poisonous, bitter, and frightful, yet for him it was an introduction into bliss ineffable. When he was about departing, and there was but a step between him and the dark waters of death, he seemed very anxious to talk, he was so happy, so joyful in the prospect of soon seeing his dear Lord. He was silent, but his looks spoke and seemed to say, 'I am going to my Saviour.' He seemed so peaceful and quiet, that his friends thought not that he was so very soon to sep-

arate from them. His sister, seeing him so anxious to talk, said to him, 'My brother, do not try to speak, it distresses you so much.' He meekly acquiesced, saying, 'Well, I will go to sleep,' and with this last word, yielding himself to the arms of his beloved sister, he sweetly fell asleep in Jesus."

Thus passed away another of the precious youth of our Seminary, July 13, 1850, at the age of fourteen years. We had fondly hoped that the Master had work for him to do here, but so it was not to be. Our labor was not lost on him, although he did not enter the sphere which we had marked out for him. His precious memory still lives. Instead of thrusting the sickle into the great harvest, as he had exhorted his father to do, and reaping fruit for the garner above, he proved to be one of the early sheaves the still toiling missionary has been permitted to shout home.

G E W E R G I S, O F G A W A R.



## GEWERGIS, OF GAWAR.

BY REV. JOSEPH G. COCHRAN.

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IN a dark land, the light of distinguished piety and attainments shines with a peculiar and sacred effulgence, just as the diamond borrows additional lustre from the coarse rock of its primal bed; and the solitary flower blooms with richer beauty amid the wilds of its native desert.

Gewergis, son of Eshoo, a native of Memikân, in the mountain district of Gawar, Koordistan, who is the subject of this obituary notice, was, we have no hesitation in declaring, a diamond of rare worth, and a most cheering illustration of the power of divine grace to sanctify, and make meet for the kingdom of heaven, the offspring of a degraded and benighted people. Indeed, it is believed that a gem of purer radiance is seldom polished in any land for its setting in the Saviour's crown.

Gewergis was a nephew of deacon Tamo, the former principal native teacher of the Male Seminary at Seir, by whom he was introduced as a pupil. He had been a member of the Seminary about four years, at the time of his decease. He came to us a coarse mountain boy, having little in his external appearance to recommend him to our favor, and he exhibited little more than ordinary capabilities and attainments, until after a residence of nearly two years with us. Immediately, however, on being brought under religious instruction, he is reported to have abandoned profaneness, and to have shown, in various ways, a ready susceptibility to the milder and more healthful influences of his new relation. His interest in the prosecution of his education will appear from his courageous enterprise in common with that of his mountain companions in going so far from home—seventy or eighty miles—to attend the Seminary, and over a region then far enough from being secure, as the following record of his second journey to Oroomiah will show. It is taken from a letter, addressed by Dr. Wright to the secretaries of the A. B. C. F. M., giving some account of the sufferings of Deacon Tamo and his friends, from the bigoted, persecuting efforts of Mar Shimon, and of Koordish chiefs whom the Patriarch instigated against them. Dr.

Wright says, "The time having arrived for our Male Seminary to be opened again, we sent a message to Gawar after Tamo. He was afraid to leave home at that time; and he did not come until we had despatched a second messenger for him. He then ventured to set out, though in so much fear of the Mudebbir, (the Koordish chief of Gawar,) that he started in the night, and came by a circuitous and distant route to avoid his vigilance. The party consisted of himself and two brothers, and one nephew, (Gewergis, the subject of this sketch,) and the messenger from Oroomiah; the nephew and one of the brothers, however, being quite small boys. Their parting from their relatives, in those circumstances of trial and sorrow, was affecting. They all wept together in the darkness of the night, as they departed from each other. They had, however, peace of conscience, and joy in the Lord. Travelling on foot over the lofty mountains, and the little boys soon becoming tired, they were four days in reaching Tergawer. On the way to this place, they met with no disaster; and the Nestorians whom they saw treated them with kindness. But their sufferings were not yet ended, as the following narrative in the language of deacon Tamo will show, namely: "On Thursday, the 16th of November, (1849,) we came to

Tooloo, and entered the house of priest Khnan Eshoo. We saluted him and kissed his hand. Some men—one of them a mussulmân—came in and began to talk about Mar Shimon and his power. We said nothing. After a little, the priest left the house, and a man came to me, saying, ‘Rise up and go; for the priest is not willing that you should sit in his house.’ A mussulmân also came to us soon after and said, ‘Be gone!’ We then rose up and went to Toolakee. We entered the house of a widow whose name was Senamee. After we had sat a little while, the people of the house brought us some dinner and we ate. Soon afterward, we laid ourselves down to sleep. Hamis, David, Gewergis, and the brother of Ooshana, slept near together in a row. I lay down on the floor, a little apart from them. After we had been asleep awhile, we were roused by some men laying upon us heavy blows. They were saying to each other, in Koordish, “Kill them.” They beat us very much. The chief man among them was Abdal Bey, a young Koord, living in one of the villages of Tergawer. He threatened us and said: ‘The patriarch sent a letter to us, saying, if you meet with some men from Meïnikân, rob and kill them.’ There were eight or ten of the robbers. One of them said, ‘Priest Khnan

Eshoo sent to us to come and rob you. We have heard that you have much money with you.'

"The people of the house carried word to a Shikoik Koord, named Amar, who was in the village. He came and saved us from their hands; so they did not beat us any more. Abdal Bey said, 'If they do not give me ten tomons, they shall not escape from my hands.' I said, 'We have no money; you have taken our clothes and we have nothing else.' He wanted to bind our hands and carry us up to Soolkee; but Amar gave him five tomons in our stead,—four tomons in hand, promising another. They then went away, and Amar took us to his own house, where he made a place ready for us, and we lay down; but sleep did not come to our eyes from fear. After a little while, the robbers returned, and wanted to carry us to Soolkee. Amar gave them another tomon, and saved us from their hands.

"We remained there till morning, when Amar sent us, with an attendant, to the house of Meerza, this side of Tergawer, on the way to Oroomiah. From there Meerza's son took the boys to the city and I remained with Meerza that night as security for the six tomons that Amar had paid for our rescue. The next day, Meshedy came with the money and took me to the city."

Thus far from Deacon Tamo. Dr. Wright continues: "Can you imagine any thing more fearful? A helpless party of inoffensive Nestorians—two of them small boys—are wrapped in sleep after the fatigues of a long and toilsome journey. The lamp is extinguished, and the house is quiet. Suddenly, a band of merciless Koords rush in, armed with guns, swords, etc., and with a savage yell fall upon the sleeping party. They open their eyes, and what do they expect but certain death? The little boys cry aloud; and all plead that their lives may be spared. But, behold, a friendly Koord, of another tribe, touched with pity for the defenceless party, comes to their aid, and saves them from the hands of the ruthless robbers, though not without loss!"

"Nothing was left them but their shirts and trousers. The friendly Koord furnished them with such clothing as he could, to come to the city; and when we heard of Tamo's condition, we sent a man with money to his rescue, and such clothing as he should require. Upon reaching our house, he was much overcome. He was suffering from his bruises, and so much overcome by the scenes through which he had passed, since he left us, that he could scarcely control his feelings to relate them. He wept like a child. But not a word of regret had

escaped his lips, that he had espoused the cause of Christ. On the contrary, his soul seemed pervaded with peace and joy, that he was counted worthy to suffer for that dear name."

Deacon Tamo, as it will be recollected by many of our readers, has long been the subject of relentless persecution, on the part of the Nestorian patriarch and his satellites. It is but recently that he was released from a cruel imprisonment in the Koordish town of Vau, inflicted by the Turkish government on utterly false pretences, and protracted more than a year, at the instigation of those Nestorian persecutors. The good man was finally released by the decided efforts of that distinguished philanthropist, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, to whose kind interest and efforts, in behalf of those suffering for conscience' sake, the friends of missions are so much indebted.

Though this biographical sketch has to do mainly with one of those "little boys" who were in such fearful peril in that nightly assault from the bloody Koords, the prominent incidental references which we have thus made to his uncle, Deacon Tamo, to whose fostering care he was greatly indebted, will not be deemed inappropriate.

During the powerful and extensive revival of the winter of 1849, Gewergis became a hopeful sub-

ject of divine grace, and maintained, through the succeeding year, both in the Seminary and at his home, a walk and conversation consistent with the profession he had made. His family friends speak of him as having been, at this period, affectionate and dutiful, and believe that he habitually maintained secret prayer. Shortly after the vacation of the Seminary, a member of our mission visited Gawar, and on walking out to see the ruins of a church, he once accidentally heard Gewergis engaged in his private devotions there, and was so struck with the humility and fervor of his prayer as to feel, as he afterwards remarked, a degree of assurance that the youth had indeed learned the language of Canaan.

The memorable revival of the succeeding winter apparently witnessed a very great advance in Gewergis. His convictions of sin became more powerfully pungent, his consecration more entire, and his prayerfulness, and longing desire for the salvation of his companions and people, more earnest and all-engrossing. His thirst for knowledge, and particularly for divine truth, was greatly quickened. The writer can call to mind no companion of his, who was more tenderly inquisitive in reference to questions of conscience and practical duty than was Gewergis; nor any one who exhibited more

moral discrimination, or a stronger desire to know just what is the mind of the Spirit. His general bearing, as a member of the Seminary, was also exemplary, ingenuous, and earnest.

The following spring, while spending a few days in the city of Oroomiah, in preparation for returning to his mountain home, he left, by his daily conversation and prayer with a sick school mate, a sweet fragrance. That school mate\* received an earlier summons to his eternal rest and reward. Incidents subsequently occurred, which showed a tender sympathy to have existed between these two companions, which now appears to have been the fruit of that spiritual union, which, we trust, has been so early and gloriously consummated in the spirit world.

Deacon Tamo, and the other pious members of his family, bear unqualified testimony to Gewergis's remarkable spirituality and devotedness to his Master's service during the succeeding summer. They believe that he habitually spent three or four seasons daily in solitary prayer. In his efforts to assemble the people of his village for religious services on the Sabbath, and in the promotion of the

\* Mekhiel, son of priest Dunkha, the subject of the preceding sketch in this volume.

general interests of truth and righteousness, he was zealous and untiring; and in reproofing profaneness and other sins, he was kind, but firm and fearless. The godless women of his then comparatively unenlightened village \* used to remark, “Gewergis prays so much, and talks to us so much, that he sickens our hearts.”

Gewergis is reported to have been very industrious at work, and uniformly considerate and respectful to his parents. It is undoubtedly attributable to his exemplary conduct, in this respect, that he won so remarkably on their affection, and was held in such high esteem by the ignorant villagers, among whom his light was permitted to shine. On one occasion, during his sickness, with a view to console his deeply stricken parent, Gewergis remarked, “But, father, God has yet left you other children.” “Yes,” the weeping parent replied, “but, alas, no *Gewergis!*”

Those of our mission who visited Gawar, that season, remarked, with still deeper interest, the rapid development and symmetrical maturity of his character, no trait of which was more conspicuous than his unaffected and earnest piety.

\* Memikân, which has since become the seat of our mission station in Koordistan.

The writer, on one occasion, more to introduce so pleasant a theme than to elicit any needed information, asked his uncle, Deacon Tamo, how Gewergis appeared. "Just as at first," the deacon replied, and proceeded to express, in enthusiastic but scarcely hyperbolical language, his admiration of the many excellent traits in the character of his young nephew.

On his return to us, the autumn preceding his death, Gewergis had so changed, in his whole character and appearance, as nearly to efface from our minds the impressions which his previous youth and rusticity had made. The coarse, profane, and selfish child of nature had become the considerate, amiable, and exemplary child of grace. There was also a surprisingly rapid physical development in his case. His form had become quite tall, and his features manly.

He now took a more than respectable stand as a scholar; and his modest, as well as active and energetic bearing, commanded for him a wide and decided influence in the Seminary. In a solitary instance, that incidentally came to my knowledge, he was, in an unguarded moment, drawn into an angry dispute with one of his companions; but on being called to my study, two or three days afterward, he frankly, and with much chagrin, con-

fessed his fault, and added, that he had already become reconciled to his brother, and that they had prayed together to the Lord to forgive their sin.

In the revival that soon followed the opening of the term, Gewergis was found to be awakened, with his lamp trimmed and burning, some days before the mass of the pious gave evidence of any special quickening. And it was during this season of revival that his all-engrossing interest in spiritual things, and his wonderful importunity in prayer, were more especially noticed. He seemed to assume, in feeling, much of the burden of the work, and it is known that he returned at midnight from an hour and a half's visit to his wonted retreat, (a rude, unlighted, and unwarmed closet, which opens into the yard of the Seminary premises,) to lie down on his sick-bed, from which he was never again to rise. Coming from the mount of such communion with God, it is scarcely surprising that his face continued to shine, as did the face of Moses, up to the time of his peaceful and triumphant departure.

“The chamber where the good man meets his fate  
Is privileged beyond the common walk of virtuous life,  
Quite on the verge of heaven.”

Indeed, a death-bed so happy, and so uninterruptedly illumined by the Saviour's presence as was that of Gewergis, it has never been the privilege of the writer to witness, either in this or his native land; and I feel my utter incapacity to describe the emotions of admiration, gratitude, and grief, which the dying scene awakened. The members of the Seminary and other Nestorians witnessed the spectacle with awe and deep emotion. A discriminating Nestorian remarked, "Our people have never known such a death." Mr. Coan says of it, in a letter published in the Journal of Missions, "I have often seen the power of the Gospel to sustain in a sick and dying hour, but never have I beheld richer displays of that power than in the case of this young man. His patience and humility, his cheerful hope and calm resignation, his childlike faith and unwavering trust in Christ, and his peaceful and triumphant death, produced a most wonderful impression upon his school mates and all who saw him." Dr. Perkins, in conducting the funeral services, used the following language in relation to these scenes: "I have been happy during his sickness to try to alleviate his bodily pains, but I have also been greatly refreshed in spirit; and I have been instructed, admonished, edified, and comforted, in watching the remarkable exercises of his mind,

and the ardent longing of his soul after Christ and heaven. Since the death of Mrs. Grant, more than twelve years ago, I have been present at no so rapturous death-bed scene, nor have I ever beheld any more interesting or more wonderful."

The summons was sudden and imperative, as it was kind and merciful. A fortnight's course of raging bilious fever sufficed to demolish his earthly tabernacle. He died February 5, 1851, at the age of about seventeen years.

The few, among the many touching incidents of the closing scenes of this dear youth's life, together with some additional reminiscences of him, which I shall endeavor briefly to narrate, will perhaps be most conveniently arranged under the following heads.

1. The *gratitude* of Gewergis was very noticeable. This exotic, in this dark and selfish land, bloomed with no ordinary beauty and fragrance in the heart of Gewergis. The holy, angelic love which filled his soul, would gush forth in sentiments of gratitude and thankfulness, on the slightest attentions paid to his bodily wants. His uncles, three of whom were in attendance on him, and his school companions, who loved to render any needed assistance, were always amply rewarded by blessings invoked upon them. And when Doctor Wright, or

Mrs. Cochran, or other members of the mission would administer some cordial or other comfort, his heart seemed literally to overflow with gratitude and love. "My mother, my dear mother," was his invariable salutation when Mrs. Cochran entered the room; and, "May you be happy, may God reward you," was the response to every attention.

2. His strong *filial feelings* are worthy of mention. Dutifulness and respect for his parents marked the whole of his Christian and perhaps of his earlier life. During his sickness, the names of his father and mother were almost constantly upon his lips. "O my parents, my beloved parents! my heart burns for you! When shall I see you? You are far off!" Then, as if to console himself, he would exclaim, "My father is in Gawar, but Jesus is near. He is at my side. Precious Saviour! I can see him bleeding on the cross for me." His father, not aware of his illness, and leaving his home as he avowed for the sole purpose of seeing Gewergis, by a most merciful providence arrived at Seir the night preceding his death, and in time to receive the parting recognition of his beloved child. The grief of the deeply afflicted parents seemed almost unbounded, but the efforts of his son to comfort him continued as long as his strength remained. "Fear not, my father, God is merciful, God is good," he

would often remark. When the father said, "But what shall I do, my son?" the reply was, "Trust in the Lord;" counsel by which we may hope the bereaved but submissive and believing father has not failed to profit.

3. His *prayerfulness*, not only during his sickness, but previously, is deserving of additional notice. Gewergis seemed beautifully to exemplify the Scripture injunction, "Praying always with all prayer." His habits, in this respect, as well as the singular simplicity of his life, seemed not less beautifully to harmonize with the high devotional character of the early martyr period of the church, than it fearfully and admonitorily contrasts with the want of faith and singleness of life which characterizes the present time. The age chronologically near to our Lord was an age of importunate and prevailing prayer. Aside from the abundant Scripture testimony to this fact, how fully does a reference to the early Christian fathers verify our assertion. The night watches, as well of domestic quiet, as of the prison cell, reverberated the voice of supplication and the song of praise. Says Tertullian, "We weary heaven with the importunity of our prayers, and reach the ear of God." Says the author of "Ancient Christianity Exemplified," "Primitive Christians were accustomed to begin and end their customary occupa-

tions with prayer, silent or audible. The various agricultural pursuits, sowing, reaping, harvesting, were begun and ended with prayer. So on laying the foundation of a house, or beginning to occupy it, or going on a journey, or even to a bath, on forming a new relation, or parting with a friend, or addressing to him a letter, they indulged in prayer. They prayed, indeed, always, by prayer and supplication, making known their requests to God with thanksgiving for every blessing of his hand; and on important occasions of general interest, such as the preservation of some valuable life, or deliverance from persecution, public prayers and thanksgivings were offered by the assembled church."

Gewergis lived spiritually, though not chronologically, near to his Lord, and most graciously, we cannot doubt, received the primitive baptism. His prayerfulness has probably seldom been equalled. Ordinarily, he was among the last of our pupils at his private devotions at evening, and among the first to repair to his closet at morning's dawn. • Quite frequently, especially in seasons of unusual interest, he would rise at midnight and repair to his cold and dark retreat, which he perhaps never failed to find warm with a Saviour's love, and radiant with his gracious presence. He was often known to spend two hours at a time in his closet, and would

sometimes wholly refuse to retire to his bed at night, literally “ preventing the night watches ” with meditation and prayer. As might be inferred, in his gifts in public prayer, Gewergis soon excelled his companions, who were his superiors in scholarship and natural talents.

4. His *self-abasement* seemed as sincere as it was deep and artless. More than once, in his last sickness, he called to his bedside his uncles, kissed them, and begged that they would forgive him, and requested his parents and all his friends to do the same. On one occasion, the term *father* was used, the speaker probably referring to his absent parents; but Gewergis, being absorbed with eternal things, and deeply conscious of his ill-desert, most feelingly responded, “ Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.” In the most cheering views of the glories that awaited him, he would exclaim, “ I am a sinner — I am vile — my face is black,” (the latter being a strong figurative expression among the Nestorians and other orientals to convey the idea of a deep sense of unworthiness or of guilt).

5. His *clear apprehension of the Lord Jesus Christ*, as his righteousness and his salvation, should also be mentioned. At one time, having mistaken the

conversation of some persons in the room, and supposing that there was an intention to make a sacrifice and vow in his behalf,—a custom formerly very prevalent among the Nestorians, his abhorrence of the idea could hardly have been less than was that of the apostles, when the idolaters of Lycaonia were about to sacrifice to them as gods. “No, no,” he violently exclaimed, “Christ is my sacrifice; he is my offering; I have given myself to him, and he requires no more.” The great doctrine of redemption by the blood of Christ, of which the sacrifices of the Jewish ritual were typical, as set forth particularly in the epistle to the Hebrews, which he had just been studying in his class-exercises, seemed to have been implanted deeply and intelligently in his mind, as the only foundation of his faith and his salvation.

Although conscious of his own vileness and ill-desert, his confidence in regard to his personal acceptance, through this last great Sacrifice, seemed never for a moment to be shaken. As at the commencement, so at the end of his sickness, he could humbly but confidently affirm, “I have chosen Christ, and I know he will love me.”

6. His *familiarity with Scripture*, considering the extent of his studies, appeared to us in a high degree remarkable. In his sickness, he was fre-

quently delirious; but even at such times, he was sane on religious subjects, and his recollections of Scripture incidents were always correct. Ordinarily, during that time, his mind was wonderfully active, vigorous, and communicative; and the scenes of Bible History, the dealings of the Lord with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the labors of our Saviour, the scenes of Gethsemane and the cross, were described accurately, and clothed in the drapery of the most glowing and captivating imagery.

7. His *spiritual apprehensions*, or, were the term not liable to misconstruction, we should say, spiritual visions, may bere garded as one of the most striking characteristics of his sickness. Having been laid upon his dying bed, in the midst of a precious revival, in which he had preëminently shared, it is not surprising that the realities of the eternal world were much upon his mind. On the Sabbath before his decease, as an uncle, who was attending on him, expressed a wish to hear Mr. Perkins preach, he replied, "He is only a man; but the Lord Jesus is preaching here. Can you not see him? He is there," pointing upward. "He is crowned with glory. Myriads of angels surround him, and are chanting Hallelujahs to his praise." And in the glow of his emotions, he began to sing

a hymn, containing the beautiful appropriate sentiment in reference to them, “Would that I could rejoice with your joy!” Soon the vision changed, and he cried out, “Oh wretched sinners! wretched millions going down to hell! My heart bleeds for them! How near is Jesus! Will they not look to him and be saved? That one prayer of the penitent thief would save them all!” He was much in audible prayer; and his uncle, at one time, fearing the effect of over-exertion, requested him to cease from the effort for a season. He answered, “How can I cease? In your sickness, last year, you were not awakened, else you would have prayed more. I must pray,—I cannot cease from it. If my mouth were shut, my heart would still pray and praise the Lord.”

His views of God, and of the glories of the eternal world, seem wholly unaccountable, save on the supposition of a special illumination given to departing spirits. Their originality and sublimity were marvellous in the extreme. The eternal throne, the persons of the Godhead seated there, the solemn transactions of the final day, the joys of heaven, the garments of celestial glory, were successively passing before his mind, as things of unmistakable reality. “Moses on the mount,” he remarked, “did not see God as I see him. No mor-

tal has seen him as he is. His glory is inexpressible! I cannot tell you any thing about it. Oh, the ravishing beauties of heaven, the shining garments of the blessed! What is all earthly beauty, compared with these!" His joy and exultation were overflowing. In the midst of the severest pains, he would break forth in songs of praise. He saw himself, as it were, surrounded by glorified spirits, and he longed to mingle his celestial hallelujahs with theirs.

Such was the peaceful end of this happy spirit. Death had lost its sting. The swelling Jordan, as to the dying Payson, appeared but an insignificant rill, and the celestial city was fully in view. Among his last words were, "Father, I am thine. Christ, I have chosen thee."

It would be more than superfluous to add any reflections of our own to this simple narrative of the brief life and triumphant death of our departed brother. Our eyes have seen the salvation of the Lord. We feel that we were blessed in the sight. And in view of such precious displays of grace, we feel, in the spirit of the apostle, devoutly to thank the Lord and take courage.

The hallowed savor of the precious memory of Gewergis lingers sweetly around the little village of Memikân, among the Koordish mountains, which

was the home of this young seraph. A station of our mission has been commenced at that village since his death. May it not be, that his ministering spirit hovers over it? And may we not regard him as a pledge of many more rich diamonds, for the Saviour's crown, yet to be gathered from those dark mountains?

The following touching lines appeared in the Journal of Missions, shortly after the publication of an obituary notice of Gewergis in that periodical:—

### GEWERGIS.

“ANOTHER JEWEL FOR THE SAVIOUR'S CROWN.”

Another gem for the Saviour's crown!  
Wrought out from a darksome mine;  
A gem so bright with its wondrous light,  
That the stars it must outshine.

’T was a worthy work, down the dreary mine,  
To press with courage bold;  
And from thence to bring this treasure to Him,  
Worth a price on the earth untold.

A worthy work! at the last great day,  
To all it will thus appear;  
In dignity high, it will fill each eye,  
As the work to have been chosen here.

For, when his jewels the King of kings  
Shall number up on high,  
He will prize this gem in his diadem,  
Far more than the starry sky.

And such a gem, in eternity long,  
Will no lustre nor beauty lose,  
But its glorious rays on his brow shall blaze,  
With ever brightening hues.

Oh, who will still go to the distant mine,  
And gather the jewels there ?  
Who will lose his hold on the glistening gold,  
That he in this work may share ?

F.

H O I M E R ,

T H E W I F E O F N A S E R .



## HOIMER, THE WIFE OF NASER.

BY REV. JUSTIN PERKINS, D. D.

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HOIMER was the washerwoman of the mission families residing on Mount Seir. My first recollection of her, is meeting her bright eye and smiling face, as we were leaving the place of worship, the first Sabbath after we went to Seir to reside, on our return from America in 1843. She was then more than thirty years old, a good looking woman, of remarkably hale appearance, very quick, active, and energetic in her character and habits, and much more intelligent and competent than the mass of Nestorian females. She was married, but had no children, and was thus able to give a large share of her time to labor in the families of our mission.

Hoimer had a shrill voice and a forward manner; and her general capability, and uncommon fluency, made her prominent in the small village of Seir,

as a ready counsellor on affairs in general, and especially in emergencies. She often faced and silenced oppressive Mohammedan tax-gatherers, in their lawless abuse and attempts at extortion, when the men of the village would flee and conceal themselves. The prowling harpies would quail before the presence and well-administered rebukes of that resolute woman, when all the men of the place could not stand their ground.

With her characteristic energy and assurance, which often seemed rather unwomanly, though so well displayed in emergencies, Hoimer was not, however, unamiable in her disposition, nor was she wanting in gentle and estimable traits of female character. She possessed naturally a very kind and generous heart. She ever seemed anxious that others should share in all her comforts. Many times has she brought to the families of the mission a portion of her humble dainties. This trait, with her sunny, genial face and lively manners, took a strong hold on the affections of their children, who have seldom been more attached to any Nestorian. This was particularly the case with our now sainted Judith, with whom Hoimer was ever a peculiar favorite.

From the first of our residence at Seir, Hoimer was constant in her attendance at our religious

meetings, and she was also, apparently, an earnest listener to the word. Struck with her uniformly fixed attention, when her companions were often listless or sleeping around her, the preacher was sometimes led to feel that the truth had certainly secured a lodgement in her heart. On conversation with her he was, however, as often disappointed to find that while she did, indeed, remember much that she had heard, yet instead of receiving the truth in the love of it, she only held it in unrighteousness. We have seldom met with a Nestorian, of either sex, to whom the epithet, self-righteous, could be more appropriately applied. She had, from childhood, attached a very sacred importance to the dead, empty forms of the Nestorian church, and scrupulously fulfilled them. Her general character being fair, she also greatly prided herself on that; and to this stock of her own righteousness, it now appeared that she was rapidly adding, by her constant attendance on our religious worship, and her strict attention to the word preached. That word, to which she so eagerly listened, all as yet lay cold and inoperative in her memory, producing no perceptible effect on her heart, and little on her conduct; but she seemed fully to believe, that it must somehow add to her good estate to give it an attentive hearing.

From year to year Hoimer thus lived on, retaining essentially the same character, being externally correct, and a constant and attentive listener at meeting, yet on examination found to be only the same confirmed, self-righteous pharisee. But in the revival of 1849, in which the village of Seir graciously shared, Hoimer was awakened and was under strong conviction of sin. The word which she had so long heard, but not felt, now became *alive*, quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword. It was to her, indeed, the sword of the Spirit, divinely applied to her callous conscience. Her own righteousness became in her sight as filthy rags, and she was led, as she hoped, to abandon it and trust only in the mercy and grace of Christ as her Saviour. From that time her appearance and character were much subdued, and she gave evidence of having passed from death unto life, though not always entirely satisfactory; for she still, at times, seemed to be darkened, and to cling to some of her old ideas of a righteousness by the law, which had been so strongly rooted in her mind from childhood.

Not long after that revival, an adult Sabbath school was opened at Seir, in which Hoimer and several other women commenced learning to read. In that difficult undertaking she displayed her characteristic energy, and would soon have far out-

stripped her companions, had not sickness arrested her progress. That healthy countenance and robust form, which had so long seemed proof against disease, and on which she had fondly prided herself, were now assailed and prostrated. For many months she suffered from a lingering fever, which finally ran into an obstinate dropsy. Under the latter disease her sufferings were great, but as the outer man was gradually dissolving, the inner man was strengthened day by day. She enjoyed increasing confidence in Christ, and could look for salvation through his blood alone. Her lingering trust in any thing else now left her; and it was delightful to witness her childlike reliance on the Lord Jesus, and listen to her expressions of ardent affection for him.

Contrary to the apprehensions of all, she not only survived the winter of that year, but as spring opened, her disease assumed a mitigated form, and she became so comfortable that she could even walk about. To the minds of the simple Nestorians, marvellous healing virtue had been derived by her from an application often resorted to by them in cases of dropsy, namely, being wrapped in the flesh-side of a skin fresh taken from a wild swine of the neighboring Koordish mountains, which is but an item of many strange chapters of Persian *materia medica*.

Though still unable to labor, Hoiner soon renewed her efforts to learn to read. Often has the writer seen her walking tremblingly, with staff in one hand and her book in the other, in search of some child who could teach her, and when found, both seated under the shade of a tree, and she, in her feeble state, toiling by the hour over the pages of her spelling-book. Great was her delight, also, when she could again go to the house of prayer, and especially to the monthly concert, where she never appeared empty-handed.

She continued in this state of apparent convalescence through the summer, and till late in the autumn, when her disease began again to assume a threatening aspect, and she was confined to her bed. She now gave up all hope of recovery, and seemed unwilling to hear the possibility of it mentioned. She expressed no desire to get well, but the reverse. Often thanking God that he had given her the respite of the few previous months, to hear more of his word, and better prepare for her great change, she was sure that that change was now near at hand. It was very delightful to visit her, and converse and pray with her, in this waiting posture of her mind. How often have I made my way, unanticipated by the family, into the humble dwelling of her brother, to which she was carried soon after this

relapse, and there found a little group, and not seldom a large one, of all ages, seated in solemn silence around her couch, spread upon a small coarse carpet on the earth floor, listening to her ardent ejaculations, or, when she had strength to say more, to her prayers and expostulations. She and her brother were very strongly attached to each other,— the more so, from having been left lone orphans when very small, and grown up in adversity. He had been for several years a devoted Christian, and he now not only nursed his only sister most tenderly, but also often assisted her to keep her thoughts on Christ, by leading in prayer and reading the New Testament, which, self-taught, he had learned to read with considerable fluency, and by engaging in religious conversation with her and those around her. The sorrowful husband was always there, but being a stranger to Christ and his salvation, he could not be comforted by the consolations which the well-founded hopes of his dying wife so richly imparted to the believer.

Hoimer thus continued some three months, growing gradually weaker in body, her sufferings often being intense, but waxing stronger and stronger, in faith and in the hope of heaven, as she descended the bank of Jordan, till February 27, 1852, when she fell asleep in Jesus, at the age of about forty years.

She was sorely lamented by the people of Seir, among whom she was a universal favorite, to whom she had witnessed a good confession, especially during the last mouths of her sickness, and whom she had often and solemnly warned, and affectionately exhorted to prepare to meet her in heaven.

GOZEL,

DAUGHTER OF PERA.



## GOZEL, DAUGHTER OF PERA.

BY MISS MARY SUSAN RICE.

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IN one of the two Nestorian quarters of the city of Oroomiah, at a little distance from the mission premises, is the dwelling of Gozel's parents. For several years Gozel was the light of that pleasant home. She was the child longest spared to that fond father and mother. God had given them other children, but he soon recalled them, to join the infant throng above ; and it is not strange that Gozel, their only remaining one, should receive the overflowing affection of oft-bereaved parental hearts, nor that a world of earthly joys and hopes should be centred in their beloved daughter.

When quite young, Gozel was sent to school, and was at length received into the Female Seminary. She was a pleasant, affectionate child, and, though accustomed to indulgence at home, she was

easily brought to conform to her teacher's wishes. If a shade of wrong feeling sometimes rested on her face, a pleasant smile quickly succeeded and chased it away. But amiable and attractive as she was, she possessed two traits which caused us much grief. She was sometimes detected in dishonesty and untruthfulness. We wondered why one, who was so amply provided with every thing necessary to her comfort, by parents who possessed more of this world's goods than commonly falls to the lot of Nestorians, should be tempted to break the eighth commandment, and pilfer little articles from her school mates. But children, in this benighted land, are not taught by their friends that theft and falsehood are fearful sins; and while very young, their consciences are so seared, that they do not hesitate to commit them. And it is often not easy for them to lay aside those evil practices, thus early contracted, when they become older, or learn better the guilt of such sins. Gozel needed a heart renewed by divine grace, to enable her entirely to overcome these wicked habits.

In one of the revivals at Oroomiah, Gozel's father was hopefully converted. For some time previous, he had been very regular in his attendance at the mission chapel, and he was often observed to listen with the most fixed attention,

as if treasuring up every word that he heard. But he was not then seeking for the way of life ; he was only gathering materials to aid him in discussions with his papal neighbors, with whom he held frequent disputes. But the time at length came, when his eyes were opened to see that he was himself standing on slippery places. He now realized that he was a lost, ruined sinner, and gladly threw himself at the Saviour's feet for mercy. He took a very decided stand on the Lord's side from the hour of his conversion and, though the ranks of the enemy are well filled in his neighborhood, he holds on his heavenward way, waxing stronger and stronger. The ardor of his first love has not ceased to glow, after the lapse of years, and at all seasons he prays like one who enjoys large measures of grace. Pera's name, in the language of the Nestorians, signifies *lamb* ; a term that well harmonizes with his pleasant open countenance and artless character. To the eye of the missionary, his whole appearance, while sitting in our worshipping assembly, as an honest man, a sincere Christian, and ardent listener to the Word, is strikingly interesting, giving a vivid impression of a Nathanael of the Gospel — “an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.”

Pera was not satisfied with only *hearing* the

word of God; he longed to *read* it; but he was a “carpenter,” and had never learned *letters*. He was among the first adult Nestorians who attempted the strange thing, as they deemed it, of trying to learn, at that period. He endeavored to master some of the first lessons, but then abandoned the object, considering it a hopeless, impracticable undertaking for him to learn to read.

Not long after this time, Gozel returned from school for a summer vacation. Several of her companions had gone home with the intention of teaching their mothers, or other friends, to read; and she, too, was quite enthusiastic in teaching *her* loved mother. Difficult as was the task, her mother commenced with zeal, and persevered with hope, and Gozel taught her with pleasure and patience. The good progress of the mother kindled a hope in the father’s heart, that with *Gozel* for a teacher, he, too, could learn. He resumed the undertaking, and was successful. In a few months those fond parents, with their happy teacher, surrounded a family altar, each reading in turn from the Blessed Book. The parents now felt that they were richly reaping the first-fruits of their daughter’s attending school, and they were very desirous that she should make the best possible improvement of her privileges. They were both

careful that she should be constant in her attendance at school; and it was an unspeakable blessing to her, that she had a *pious* father. His desires for her conversion were strong, and grew into deep and unceasing anxiety. The last year she was in school she received a note, penned by his own hand, and the first he ever wrote, in which he counselled her to value her opportunities, and tenderly entreated her to attend to the concerns of her soul. He wrote, also, inquiring of her teacher if there were not *something more* that could be done for Gozel. The all-absorbing desire of his heart appeared to be, that he might see *his* child a *child of God*.

In the winter of 1852, a Heavenly Guest was in our midst; the Holy Spirit spoke with convicting power to some hearts, and we were permitted to hear the anxious inquiry, "How shall I find salvation?" Gozel was among those who asked that the first Monday of the year might be given them, as a day in which to care for their souls. Weeks passed on; some of her companions were quickened in their Christian course, and some, as we trust, felt a Saviour's love for the first time. The older girls felt a tender interest in their young associates, and many and tearful were their prayers and entreaties that they might give their hearts to

Christ. In such efforts, Gozel was not neglected. Solemnity deepened into anxiety. She seemed to feel more deeply for her soul than ever before. She bent over the precious words of God with unwonted interest, and often visited her closet; and she seemed to enjoy much at our family prayers. We felt that we could never speak *confidently* of her conversion; but we waited, with a trembling hope, to see these “blossoms of promise” followed by the mature fruit of a Christian life.

Gozel went home at the close of the term, and her deportment, the few weeks she spent there, greatly delighted her loving parents. “How changed! How improved!” they exclaimed; and she was a more precious daughter to them than ever. But while they were enjoying and anticipating so much in her society, a dark cloud was gathering over them, which they despaired not, till it burst upon them and wellnigh overwhelmed them.

One Saturday evening, in July, Gozel read, at family devotions, from one of the gospels. They all knelt, and each in turn led the others to the mercy-seat. The evening sacrifice was offered, and now the daughter sought a place for secret prayer. She lingered much longer than usual, and her father, beginning to think of her with anxiety, approached

her closet. . The dear girl, with “strong crying and tears,” was offering her supplications. There was unwonted earnestness in her manner, and her errand at the throne of grace was not quickly finished. “What meaneth this?” the wondering parent inquired. Little did they realize that this was Gozel’s farewell visit to her chosen place of prayer. Late they retired to rest, and all apparently in perfect health.

But the destroying angel was commissioned to tarry at their terrace. Midnight had just passed, when Gozel’s voice awoke her mother. She hastened to her bed, and found her ill. It was soon evident that her darling child was a victim of the *cholera*, then raging in Oroomiah! Who that has not felt it, can describe the agony that filled the hearts of those parents, when she said, “Mother, I think I shall leave you now.”

The hours of the night passed wearily; the morning dawned, but brought no hope. The missionary physician visited her, but medical prescription could not stay the ravages of that fearful disease. She could say but little, though she had her reason till the last.

Pera’s vacant seat at our chapel, that Sabbath forenoon, was noticed as something unusual, and on learning the cause, two of the missionaries has-

tened to his dying daughter. And what a melting scene met their eyes as they entered the sorrowful apartment! Not a word was uttered. The afflicted father and mother sat by the bedside of their only and almost idolized child,—the mother wellnigh crushed with agonizing yet silent grief; and while a heavenly resignation beamed from the father's serene countenance, still his earnest glances at the missionaries, as they approached and sat down by his side, spake the most yearning tenderness, and revealed an inward struggle which seemed to say, “Would to God I might die for thee, O my beloved daughter!”

Gozel's pulse had ceased, collapse having fully settled upon her. Her beautiful bright eyes had sunk back deep in their sockets. Her features had much fallen. She was becoming deadly cold; and her power of utterance had nearly left her,—all evincing her end as near. When addressed by one of the missionaries she however readily understood him, and to his inquiry, “Do you wish me to pray with you?” she promptly answered in a whisper, “Yes.” Though perfectly conscious, and aware of her situation, she did not seem to be much agitated, leaning, as we trust, on the Rock of Ages. She appeared to enjoy listening to the prayer,—her recollection of her teachers and her

school mates being evidently awakened by it, as well as her faith strengthened, to stem the swelling surges of Jordan. How gladly would those teachers now have been by her side; but they were far away, at a summer retreat of the mission, and knew not what had happened to this lamb of their flock, till they heard the tidings of her death.

A large number of the neighbors of Gozel's parents,—both Mohammedans and Nestorians,—had assembled in the small court, all tenderly sympathizing with them in their deep affliction; for the family are greatly respected by all who know them — even by their Papal adversaries, in whose immediate vicinity they dwell. One of those bigoted Papists,—a man living in an adjoining yard,—had heard, over the separating wall, the accents of Gozel's fervent prayers the previous evening; and, attracted by the earnestness of the suppliant, had, from curiosity, ascended the adjacent terrace and listened. Deeply impressed with the solemnity and importunity of those wrestlings with God, he had said to his friends, "If this be a specimen of the Nestorian 'heretics,' then there *is* salvation without the bounds of Papacy, the teaching of the French priests to the contrary notwithstanding." He had made his way to the agonized father and

mother that morning, and whispered in their ear the almost unearthly words which he had heard from their dying child the night before; and he often afterwards repeated the same to others apparently with deep interest.

The motley crowd in the court anxiously inquired of the missionaries, as they passed by them on leaving, "Is there any hope?" There *was* sweet hope to the trusting soul, while the earthly tabernacle was thus suddenly dissolved; but, alas, how little appreciated or comprehended by those benighted ones!

Soon after mid-day, Gozel's spirit gently passed away, as we believe, to her Saviour, leaving her pleasant home a dreary desolation, save as that compassionate Saviour vouchsafed his sustaining, consoling presence to her humble Christian father.

The funeral services, attended on the same afternoon, were very affecting. The missionary who conducted the exercises read from the New Testament which Gozel had used and so much loved. This book, and one of her dresses, were laid on the coffin, and her mother would repeatedly kiss them, pathetically saying, with tears and sobs, "Gozel is gone; our *teacher* is gone,—forever gone,—Gozel has gone!"

Gozel died not in vain. That sorely bereaved mother can now say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes." Of herself and her husband she says, "We will cling to the Saviour."



## HORMEZD, THE PILGRIM.



## HORMEZD, THE PILGRIM.

BY REV. DAVID T. STODDARD.

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SOME sixty years ago, a Nestorian of Oroomiah, a young man named Hormezd, set out on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Incited partly by a desire to see foreign countries, and partly by the expectation of thus storing up merit in heaven, he took his staff in hand, and a knapsack of provision on his shoulders, and with elastic step began his journey of two thousand miles. He had heard about the land of the patriarchs and apostles, where Solomon reigned, and the Saviour died, till his enthusiasm was all enkindled, and he was more than ready to face danger from robbers, and expose himself to a burning Eastern sun month after month, if he might only plant his foot on the sacred soil of Palestine.

We are not acquainted with the details of his

toilsome journey; we only know that it was successfully performed. After his return he quietly settled down in Geog Tapa, his native village, where he spent the remainder of his long life, having satisfied in a single year his thirst for wandering. He there received the title of Mookdusee, or, the sanctified one, a term applied by Armenians and Nestorians to those who have made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and thus acquired, in the eyes of the ignorant multitude, a peculiar sacredness of character. He seems, however, never to have been vain of this distinction, nor to have boasted of his own superior goodness. Pilgrims, while in Jerusalem, usually have their arms covered with crosses and other designs, pricked in with indigo, which they exhibit afterward as a kind of trophy. This custom Hormezd refused to follow, declaring that it would only make him proud; and whenever in conversation he referred to this journey, he would say, "I came back from Jerusalem the very same man that I went, neither more nor less." He had thus learned that a pilgrimage does not purify the heart, nor fit a man for heaven, though scores of years were yet to elapse before he learned the way to the cross of Christ.

On the arrival of the first missionary to the Nestorians, in 1834, he found this pilgrim, Hormezd, now more than seventy years of age, residing in

Geog Tapa, and an object of love and veneration to all who knew him. He was everywhere noted for his *hospitality*, and that too in a country where *all* are hospitable, and where a man must be poor indeed who would turn away another poor man from his door. His house was ever open to strangers; and, since he lived in a large and central village, where there was no caravanserai or regular stopping-place for travellers, he rarely failed to be supplied with guests. Nor did he receive and entertain them grudgingly. On the contrary, the account given of Abraham in Genesis, chapter eighteenth, might with entire propriety be applied to him:—“ And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, and said, My Lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant.”

The Pilgrim Hormezd was also remarkable for his *benevolence*. He had an orchard, which he planted about the time of his son John’s birth, and which,

on that account, he called “John’s *twin-brother*.” In the orchard he used very often to fill his pockets with apples, and then go about distributing them to the children of the village, who clapped their hands for joy whenever the Mookdusee came in sight. Having learned in his youth how to darn stockings — a common task for men in the East — he would frequently say to his simple hearted guests and companions as they sat by his side, “Your stocking has a hole in it; pull it off and I will darn it for you.” As the shoes here have generally no heels, and it is considered ill-breeding to wear shoes of any kind into the house, it is not strange that stockings should frequently need darning, and that the holes should be more conspicuous than they can be in America.

Hormezd was moreover a basket-maker, and it was his delight, having gathered in the autumn a large quantity of ozier twigs, to spend his leisure in making baskets and presenting them to his friends. He would thus give away scores in a single year. A considerable portion of grapes from his vineyard was distributed in the same way; in some seasons, nearly half the produce.

Hormezd, being somewhat acquainted with mason work, would readily go without any compensation to execute little jobs for his neighbors. This was aid which they highly prized, as it obviated the neces-

sity of sending five miles for a mason, at considerable expense, and loss of time. When the stone bridges about the village needed attention, he often spent half a day in repairing them, without so much as being asked to do it by his neighbors. Indeed, he was always foremost in every kind of improvement in his native village.

It is the custom of the females here to bake their bread daily, and to prepare it in large, thin, oblong sheets, two or three feet in length, so that each sheet, as one traveller expresses it, "resembles an enormous *flapjack*." While the Pilgrim's wife was thus baking the daily supply for the family, he frequently stood by and slipped unobserved a few sheets under his flowing garments. Then taking a walk, he would look around for hungry beggars, on whom he might bestow his bounty. It is hardly necessary to say, that in all these countries such beggars are found at every corner of the street.

It is unhappily too true in Persia and Turkey, and, indeed, in all countries unsubdued by the gospel, that the women are despised and trampled underfoot by the men. In regard to this, Hormezd was an honorable exception. He loved the wife alluded to above. He *respected* her, and treated her with an attention which excited surprise and inquiry among those who shared his hospitality.

From what has been already said, it will be inferred that the Pilgrim was an *industrious* man. Instead of following the almost universal custom of that time, and sitting down hour after hour with idlers over their pipes and wine, he was very uneasy when he had no useful employment. His life was thus a continual sermon to multitudes, teaching them that a man hath some “better thing under the sun than to eat and to drink and to be merry.”

Hormezd was distinguished from his youth for great *uprightness*. His word was always depended upon. Whenever discussions arose about questions of fact, they called in the testimony of the Mookdu-see, “and so they ended the matter.” One living in America can hardly conceive what influence honesty and truthfulness give a man in a community like this, where, when our mission was established, it was common to hear the shameless remark, “We *all* lie here. Do you think our business will prosper and we not lie?”

The Nestorian church, in common with the other oriental churches, enjoins a public religious service every morning and evening wherever there are ecclesiastics to perform it; but the mass of the people are not in the habit of being present, except on Sabbath and feast-days. Hormezd, however, made it his invariable custom from his youth to attend; and even

in midwinter, when the service was held before daylight, his place was very rarely vacant. Neither cold nor storm could deter him from what he regarded as both his duty and his privilege; and though, at the time spoken of, he knew nothing of true piety, his example is a severe reproof to those professing Christians who make a trifling shower, or a trifling cold, a pretext for absence from the house of God. The language used in the church being the ancient Syriac, Hormezd could not at first understand it; but he gradually learned to follow intelligently both the written prayers and the psalms, as read by the priests and deacons. Often when a passage was through carelessness read incorrectly, he would notice it, and mention it to them afterwards. This was the more remarkable as he was not a reader himself, and perhaps did not know a letter of the alphabet. The habits of attention and accuracy thus cultivated, were, at a later period of his life, of great service to him in familiarizing him with the Scriptures, so that his ability to quote from any part of the Old or New Testament was a wonder to his friends.

He uniformly showed a strong desire to acquire knowledge. Sometimes, on hearing that a priest from the mountain Nestorians, considered as a learned man, had come down to the Plain of

Oroomiah, he would go to the village where he was, and entreat him to return home with him to Geog Tapa. If successful in his plea, he would keep the priest up till midnight, sitting at his feet and asking him questions. It should be understood that the knowledge thus acquired was very unsatisfactory. The learning of the most learned Nestorian, of those days, was childish folly. Legends of the Saints, the efficacy of fasts and almsgiving to save the soul, the pretended revelations made to Paul when he was caught up into the third heaven,—these, and a thousand similar topics, were the invariable theme of conversation among the so called “learned ecclesiastics.” Not a word about faith, repentance, the new birth, holiness of heart, nor even about the Lord Jesus Christ, did the Pilgrim hear from these blind guides.

But Hormezd was not satisfied with thus attempting to increase his own scanty stock of knowledge. He labored hard to excite a thirst for education in Geog Tapa. Having under his care a promising boy, a nephew of his, whose father was dead, he determined to give him the best education the country afforded. In pursuit of a teacher he first made a journey on foot to Salmas, a distance of fifty or sixty miles, and there endeavored to per-

suade a priest, reputed to be well acquainted with the ancient Syriac, to return with him. This priest, who prided himself on his character and standing, replied rather scornfully, "Shall I leave home and trudge off with you for one baby scholar?" "You shall have more than one," replied the Pilgrim; "I will get up a school for you;" presenting him at the same time, as a further inducement, with a sum of money, a coat, and pair of shoes. His appeal was successful, and he returned with the priest in triumph. He was faithful to his promise, and besides his own little nephew, now our excellent helper, priest Abraham, he gathered eleven others, and organized a school. The teacher was entirely supported by Hormezd for *four years*, the pupils all receiving their instruction gratuitously. On the return of the priest to Salmas, the Mookdusee again bestirred himself to procure a teacher. In pursuance of this object he made a journey, at that time considered a very perilous one, to Gawar, a distance of seventy miles. From that district he brought down with him Priest Dunkha, who lived in the family of the Mookdusee, as his predecessor had done, and in three years' time advanced the pupils, now grown up to be young men, so far that several of them were made priests.

That a man who could not read himself should

thus show more zeal to promote education than all the Bishops and Nestorian ecclesiastics of Oroomiah combined, and support, at his own expense, for seven years, the only school known in the province, and that too when he was not a pious man; that instead of glorying in what he had done, he should have the modesty to call it Mar Elias's school, though the Bishop stood to it only in the relation of a patron and adviser, is a moral wonder, and entitles him to our respect, praise, and admiration.

It may naturally be asked, why Hormezd did not become a reader himself. The answer is a simple one. When our mission was established, and indeed for a long time afterward, the Nestorians were with difficulty persuaded that an *adult could* learn to read. Even now, a man who has taught himself the art, without going to school in his boyhood, is looked on, in the more unenlightened villages, as a curiosity, although the number of such is every year increasing. Had the possibility of his learning to read entered the Pilgrim's mind before his eye-sight began to fail, he would doubtless have applied himself with unwearied assiduity to the task, and met with the highest success.

In 1834, Mr. Perkins, the pioneer of our mission, arrived in Persia, and took up his residence in the city of Tabreez, thinking it unwise to establish

himself in the more remote and uncivilized city of Oroomiah, until he should be joined by an associate. Soon after reaching Tabreez, however, he visited our present field, partly with the design of becoming acquainted with the people, but principally in order to take with him to Tabreez a Nestorian ecclesiastic, who would teach him the Syriac language. He was prospered in both these objects, the Bishop, Mar Yohannan, and Priest Abraham, accompanying him on his return. The latter had at that time reaehed the age of twenty, and, having enjoyed the privileges of his uncle Hormezd's school for more than seven years, was considered the most intelligent priest in the province. The Pilgrim committed him to Mr. Perkins's care with the liveliest satisfaction, and exulted in the coming of missionaries to his people, as the dawn of a brighter day. So much interested was he in promoting the general object, and so eager to avail himself of the advantages thus held out, that he endeavored to persuade Mr. Perkins to take his only son, a boy nine years old, with him to Tabreez for instruction. He, however, declined taking the responsibility at that time, and the child remained with his father.

Some time after Mr. Perkins's return to Tabreez the aged man made the journey of one hundred and

forty miles, in order to inquire after the welfare of his favorite nephew, and pay a visit to the missionary. According to ancient custom in the East, he brought with him a liberal present of the fruits of the land.\* After remaining with these friends some days he became weary of having nothing to do, and procuring a spade, without Mr. Perkins's knowledge dug up the square before the house and made it into a handsome garden. This he divided into two parts, one for the missionary and the other for his wife, executing the whole with so much taste, and with such hearty good-will, that they received a most favorable impression of his character.

During the visit, an incident occurred which may be mentioned as illustrating another trait in his character. On entering Mr. Perkins's study for the first time, his eye was attracted by a row of large quarto volumes, arranged on the lowest shelf of the book-case. Supposing them to be all copies of the *SCRIPTURES*, he stooped down and reverently kissed each one in turn. He had never before seen so many large books together, and little did he dream that he was thus devoutly kissing the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*!

\* So Jacob to Joseph, Gen. 43: 11, Jeroboam to Abijah, 1 Kings 14: 3, etc.

The next year, Mr. Perkins came to Oroomiah to reside. The aged Pilgrim, on hearing of his arrival, immediately called on him and presented his little son Yohannan to him, in the following words:—“This child is no longer *mine*, he is *yours*; he is no longer *Nestorian*, he is *English*; his name is no longer *Yohannan*, it is *John*;” at the same time placing the child’s little hand in the missionary’s to give solemnity to the transaction. In this *John* will be recognized at once the present pastor of Geog Tapa, with whose name and labors thousands in America are familiar. The little boy has now become a man, and the father of a family, and at the time this sketch is written is laboring, day and night, to save souls, in his native village.

When schools were established in Geog Tapa, and other villages, Hormezd, as might have been expected, showed the greatest eagerness to promote the object. He went about from house to house, interceding with many parents, who were utterly indifferent to the advantages of education, that they would permit their children to learn to read. After having obtained the consent of the parents he would try to interest the children, and watch, day by day, to see that they were not absent from school. He thus brought forward quite a number, who are now among our best

helpers. Some of them remember the time when the Mookdusee would take them in his arms, and, in spite of their struggling and remonstrances, would carry them to the school-room, and then endeavor to make them contented and happy there. As at this period of life he was too old to work constantly, he was in the habit of sitting, for hours together, every day, in the schools, listening to the children as they read the Bible in ancient Syriac and translated it into the modern. It was in these schools that he acquired such familiarity with the Scriptures, especially with the New Testament, that he was able to quote whole chapters with fluency and correctness. During the latter years of his life, after his conversion, the old man seemed never happier than when he could take John's children into his lap, and, in a simple manner, tell them stories from the Bible.

The nephew of Hormezd, Priest Abraham, continued from the first in the employ of the mission, and was, at an early day, as we hoped, led to the feet of Jesus. John, his son, was also converted in 1844, when there were very few pious Nestorians. But the old Pilgrim himself remained unmoved. It was hard for him to feel that he needed a radical change. He had always been a generation in advance of his people. Noted every-

where for his hospitality, benevolence, industry, uprightness, and liberality of feeling, strict in his fasts and prayers, a Jerusalem Pilgrim, and, unlike many of his people who make greater pretensions, conscious that he was sincere and devout, was *he* not in the way to heaven? was *he* an enemy to God? without a new birth, a total transformation, must *he* at last be classed with those on the left hand, and hear the sentence pronounced on him, "Depart, ye cursed?" Indifferent at first, the opposition of his heart was gradually aroused. When his son John was, on one occasion, preaching to a company assembled in the house from the text, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" this man, so remarkable for his mildness and good temper, burst out into a passion, and abused his son in the presence of those assembled. "What," said he, "am *I* an adulterer? Is your *mother* an adulteress? Do you place all who do not follow your ways with liars and thieves and blasphemers? Away with such doctrine; I will hear no more of it."

Though a young man, John, impelled by a sense of duty, had gone forward and established family prayers. This now awakened the old man's re-

sentiment; and, instead of uniting with the others, he would take that time to go noisily about the house and engage in some kind of work.

In the spring of 1849 John had been laboring in the city in a most interesting state of mind, during a season of revival, when it was thought best for him to return to Geog Tapa. On leaving, his heart seemed bowed down to the dust, as he thought of his unconverted father. He cried to the Lord day and night in his behalf. His mother had been converted three years before, in a most affecting manner. Miss Fisk visiting the village at this time, the aged woman, pointing to the Pilgrim, her husband, said, "Won't you go and sit by him and talk to him about the Saviour? He is a *good* man, but full of self-righteousness." Very soon after this, Hormezd was awokened. John thus announces the fact in a note written in his imperfect English. "Tell for the Christian sisters of the Seminary that my father confesses his very hard heart. He says, 'My son, I strive for my hard heart to God, but he does not hear me.' Do pray for him, I beseech you. There is much hope for him, for he prays often himself."

While under conviction, Hormezd was overheard in his closet, using the following language: "Lord,

I have left off the old way, but I don't know about the new way. Don't let me doubt. If the new way is the right way, let me see it."

It was not long after this, that light broke in upon his soul. Jesus Christ revealed himself to him as the chief among ten thousand. His doubts about the new way were all scattered to the winds; and from that time to the day of his death he could say, almost with the assurance of Paul, "I know in whom I have believed." "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." When John was asked about his father, his common reply was, "O Sir, he is a very happy man. He is just ready to fly to heaven." The robes of his self-righteousness, formerly so beautiful in his eyes, were now reckoned as filthy rags. Casting all his good works overboard, his prayers, his fasts, his alms, his hospitality, his pilgrimage, he was content to go to heaven on the plank of free grace. Hormezd had, for many years, been considered by his friends as nearly perfect; and they felt, as he had done himself, that no change was necessary, to fit him for heaven. And yet, after his conversion, all confessed that he was a very different man — far more meek, humble, and heavenly-minded. Always amiable in his disposition, he had passed a long life with numerous friends, and few, if any, enemies;

but now, he labored more than ever to promote peace and good-will in the village. He would frequently entreat, with tears, those who were alienated from each other to be reconciled. If he heard that any one had taken offence at what he himself had said or done, he would go *immediately* to him, and, kissing his hand, ask pardon. And this, not only when he was in fault, but when others misrepresented his words or conduct, and sought to provoke a quarrel with him. How closely did he, in this respect, walk in the footsteps of his Saviour. “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.”

A short time after my return from America I visited Geog Tapa, and lost no time in calling on the Mookdusee. I had not seen him since his conversion, and longed to greet him as a fellow-traveller to heaven. On approaching the house, the old man, now nearly ninety years of age, yet still retaining much of his vigor of mind, came out and grasped me by the hand. “Bless God,” said he, “that I live to meet you again. I will praise him with my whole heart for bringing you to our people once more. This God is our God forever and ever; he will be our guide, even unto death.”

I was very much affected by these words, and

the more so, as, on turning to enter the house, I learned for the first time that he had become *totally blind*. On expressing sympathy with him in this affliction he quickly replied, “Do not think I am unhappy, now that my eye-sight is gone. My heavenly Father has taken away from me the privilege of seeing the sun, moon, and stars, and the faces of my friends, and, above all, of this my beloved son, [John,] only that I may see more, and enjoy more the beams of the Sun of Righteousness. I praise God for what he has done. Once my thoughts used to go here and there and everywhere, and to be filled with the things of this world. Now I see not, and yet I see. I see God, my Father. I see Christ, my Saviour. I see heaven, my home. A few days more, and my eyes will again be opened, and I shall follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.”

On inquiry I found that this aged pilgrim was in the habit of sitting in the corner from morning to night, his lips often moving in prayer, and his heart always tuned to praise; while his son John, with more activity of body, though perhaps less spirituality of mind, went from house to house preaching the glad news of the kingdom.

After Hormezd became blind, he was led five miles on foot to the city of Oroomiah, in order to

attend an examination of our Female Seminary. The presence there of this venerable man—the Pilgrim of ninety years—so widely known, respected, and beloved, added very much to the interest of the occasion. Mr. Perkins, in an address to the assembled multitude, singled him out by name, as not only the most aged individual present, but the earliest patron of education among the people, and a uniform and hearty friend of all our missionary operations. This was the last time Hormezd visited the city, and perhaps the last time he left his native village.

Hormezd was eminently a man of *prayer*. He had six stated seasons, every day, for communion with God. Often too, after lying awake for a time in the night, he would rise, and, retiring to his closet, spend an hour in wrestling prayer. A large portion of his prayers was for his son, and, be it especially recorded, more than half of them for the extension of Christ's kingdom in the world. He used to remember each individual of our mission by name. Not being able to go from village to village himself, or to preach the gospel, he would follow our Evangelists with his prayers wherever they went. On one occasion, when several young men returned from the mountains, after making a tour through some districts shrouded in darkness,

Hormezd said to them, "God is my witness, that three times a day I have entreated Him not to allow you to come back with your heads bowed down." On another occasion, when some of our helpers reached Geog Tapa, they were taken at once to the house of the Mookdusee, his wife saying, "Come and sit down; it is *my* part to get you something to eat, and Hormezd's part to pray for you." After the good man's death, one of our pious evangelists remarked, "We lose more in John's father than we could in any *young* man, because we lose his prayers." The unspeakable value of such a man's prayers we shall never fully know till the day when the Lord makes up his jewels.

In many instances, after he became blind, while his wife or John was sitting in the room with him, not realizing that any one was present, he would kneel down to pray. As he poured out his heart to God, the intensity of his feelings increased, and he would seem to be in an agony, wrestling like Jacob with the angel of the covenant. At such times John has repeatedly seen him drawn forward on his knees from one side to the other of a large room, till his soul overpowering his weak, worn-out frame, he sank down quite exhausted. It is such prayer as this, that prevails with God.

Hormezd prayed "not as one that beateth the air." He longed with intense longing for spiritual blessings. Were all Christians to be like him, how would one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight. How soon would the Holy Spirit descend in Pentecostal effusions, and saints and angels rejoice with Christ Jesus over a regenerated world.

In the summer of 1852, when the cholera was prevalent in Oroomiah, the aged Hormezd was summoned by this fearful messenger to make haste and cross the dark river. His illness lasted but a day, and he had a presentiment from the first that he should not recover. He was at times racked with severe pain. During one such paroxysm, nature spoke. His friends by the bedside asking him, "Are you afraid?" He answered, "As Jesus was afraid, when he cried, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'" In general, however, he was in a very happy state of mind, "having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." He called his thirty-four children and grandchildren around him, bestowed on them the farewell kiss and the parting blessing, and then "died in a good old age, an old man and full of years; and was gathered to his people."

“ Sweet is the scene when Christians die ;  
When holy souls retire to rest ;  
How mildly beams the closing eye !  
How gently heaves the expiring breast !

“ So fades a summer cloud away ;  
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er ;  
So gently shuts the eye of day ;  
So dies a wave along the shore.

“ Triumphant smiles the victor's brow,  
Fanned by some guardian angel's wing ;  
O grave, where is thy victory now !  
And where, O death, where is thy sting !”

The funeral of this man of God was attended by nearly every person in the village, and by many from neighboring villages, who loved the Jerusalem pilgrim — the Jerusalem *saint*. The large assembly remained two hours by the grave, while several of the young men, who regarded Hormezd as a father, prayed with them and told them of Him who is the resurrection and the life. All eyes were dimmed with tears. All hearts were full. Those who do not believe in the doctrines of grace, said, “ Our friend has gone to heaven by his wonderful *righteousness* ;” while others more correctly said, “ Our friend has gone to heaven by his wonderful *faith* in Christ ;” and all said, “ We shall never see his

like again." "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Had there been no other fruit than this of our labors among the Nestorians, had we left father and mother, home and country, and come to this dark land only to save one such soul, to plant one such jewel in our Saviour's crown, we might well exclaim, 'It is *enough!*' The expense, the self-denial, are as nothing, compared with the blessed result." But when we remember, that, by the grace of God, we are commencing a work, which will reach in its influence to the millennium; that the converts we have seen around us are but the first-fruits, the few scattered ears of a glorious harvest, we lift our hearts, overflowing with thankfulness, to heaven, and adopt Paul's language as our own, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

K H A N U M J Â N ,

WIFE OF THE PILGRIM, HORMEZD.



## KHANUMJÂN, WIFE OF THE PILGRIM, HORMEZD.

BY MISS FIDELIA FISK.

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IT was once said by a Nestorian admirer of the Pilgrim, “ He has but one fault ; he shows too much respect to females.” This was sincerely said ; but it brought down a severe rebuke upon the author of the remark from the Pilgrim, who had just found, as he really thought, the “ virtuous woman,” one who had, in his eyes, a “ price far above rubies.” That woman was Khanumjân,\* who became the Pilgrim’s wife, and the mother of his daughters, when he was about fifty years of age. She was more than a quarter of a century younger than her husband, but age and care sat so lightly on his brow, that those

\* Literally, *lady-soul* ; but expressing in oriental parlance just about what is implied in the phrase, *lady-love*.

who knew them the last twenty years of their life could hardly realize that he was much her senior.

The good old man, when complimented in regard to his wife, had no delicacy in telling how he was led to his happy choice; how he watched the damsel when "she went down to the well and filled her pitcher and came up," and how gracefully she "let down her pitcher upon her hand and gave him drink," when returning from his day's labor; and this done, how she never mingled in the idle gossip of those gathered at the well, but "ran" to her "mother's house." He knew from her haste, he said, that she was a "keeper at home," and her manner made him believe that, Sarah-like, she would be willing to obey her Abraham, "calling him lord." He watched her in the fields and vineyards plying the spade, and he believed that with *his* help, it might soon be said of her, "she planteth a vineyard." At evening he would sometimes steal into her house on some trifling errand to be sure that "her hands" held "the distaff;" or on his way to church, before day, he would stop at her father's, and thus become in some good degree satisfied that "her candle" went "not out by night." Months of careful watching convinced him that she ate "not the bread of idleness," — would look "well to the ways of her household," and that "the heart of her husband

might safely trust in her." This settled in his mind, a few simple ceremonies made Khanumjân the Pilgrim's wife.

Now commenced a happy pilgrimage together of nearly half a century. The faithful husband, "free at home one year," did "cheer up his wife which he" had "taken." The young wife, for many years, always "took a veil and covered herself," if one said, "Thy master cometh," and she always "stood before him" till his own seat was found. Then the veil was often dropped, and words flowed freely; for she did not fear, she only reverenced her head. Those hands, which in maidenhood had held "the distaff," now never wearied with this employment, and soon her husband was "clothed in scarlet," "known in the gates," sitting "among the elders of the land." The Pilgrim did not fail to appreciate the care of his young wife, and, to show her his gratitude, he would often say, as they gathered around the evening lamp, "Now, my love, I'll darn your stockings." No sooner was this said than begun, while the bare-footed bride watched each stitch, wondering from whence such skill.

The next morning would find Khanumjân, with heart stirred by so delicate an attention as darning her stockings, laying hold of her spindle with new interest. And so this woman, "wise-hearted," did

spin with her hands, and brought that which she “spun, both of blue and of purple and of scarlet,” and gave it to the weaver’s hand. Soon the happy Hormezd saw his humble dwelling stored with mats and carpets, which his “petted wife” (for so his neighbors called her) had devised. After both these aged pilgrims had gone to their rest, Deacon John, their son, from pecuniary necessity, sold some of these pieces of carpeting. As he parted with them he dropped a tear, saying to the buyer, “You will keep them well, for my mother has prayed every inch of them over many times.”

As a mother to the Pilgrim’s motherless daughters, much can be said in her praise. Although nearly her age, they loved to call her *mother*, and it was with no common feeling that she would say of them, “these are *my* daughters.” None but the mothers of honorable men dared ask these daughters at her hands. They were, however, married, and left her, when her own little ones had scarcely begun to prattle at her side. Their children did “arise up and call her blessed.” We could not but pity that young man, who, standing on the verge of manhood, learned for the first time that she was not his *own* grandmother. “Why did you not tell me of it?” were his feeling words.

The wife of the Pilgrim fully sympathized with

him, in all his efforts for education and general improvement. But there was one point on which they differed. She felt that he dispensed his charities too freely, and would often remonstrate with him as he cast his “bread upon the waters,” “forgot a sheaf in the field,” or at harvest time “let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose,” “for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.” When she heard him with firm voice say, among the spreading vines, “thou shalt not glean afterward,” she would point him to an old age of want. He could not be brought, however, to heed her admonitions, for he was sure that he that “scattereth,” “increaseth.”

In religious duties Khanumjân walked hand in hand with her husband. She was always with him in the church, at evening service, and learned from him many forms of prayer. She did, however, go beyond him in superstitious observances. She added to his religious rites the “Old wives’ fables,” fasts and prayers, and always seemed to feel that she had more holiness than her neighbors, from being “the wife of a Mookdusee.”

But she was early a warm friend of the missionary. She would talk with him much and long in regard to his work, and seem to rejoice in its prosperity; yet when that work, in its most blessed form, came to her own dwelling, “the fountains of” her

“great deep were broken up.” When she saw her only son, her beloved John, striving with heartfelt sin, she cursed most bitterly the day in which he was born. When he attempted to have family prayers, she would leave the house. Finding that her son still prayed, she remained at such hours to make her favorite spindle sing most merrily. Prayer continuing to go up in the family, “the leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees” working in her heart, she so arranged her kneading trough, that “the whole lump” would be suddenly leavened, just at the hour of the morning sacrifice; and when John was ready to bend the knee in prayer, all must move to give her place to light her oven.

Still prayer was offered, and finding that she could not change the mind of her now “foolish son,” as she called him, she quietly sat down and listened to him.

For two long years that faithful son labored for his parents, seldom cheered with any signs for the better. While spending a few days with them early in March, 1846, fresh from the scenes of converting grace in the Seminary, his heart was strongly drawn out for them. Both of them opposed him, but the hour was at hand when he should have a Christian mother’s sympathy. A weekday service had been appointed in the village church, and many were

quietly gathering there. As John passed along, he found his mother at a spring near the church, washing, that she might not appear before the Lord "with unwashen hands." He came quietly up to her, saying, "How long will my dear mother have this heart?" Somewhat moved, she replied, "Oh, my son, how can you talk so to your mother? There is not a house among all the Nestorian people where they do not love me. Wherever I go, all wish to have the Mookdusee's wife remain with them. Only my own son dares to call me a wicked woman." A few words more passed, and they entered the church. The son's "spirit was stirred in him," and he preached to the aged from the words, "With whom was he grieved forty years? Was it not with them who had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?" He dwelt affectingly on the guilt of him who had grown old in sin. The Spirit touched that mother's soul, and before the sermon closed she wept bitter tears over that heart, which, one hour before, was in her view so good. As she left the church with trembling step, she whispered to another weeping woman, "Oh! my heart, the Lord is showing it to me!" "He is showing me mine too," was the reply of the woman, who for the last eight years has been called "the one dead to the world."

When John reached his home, he found his

mother in her closet. She was pleading with groans to be freed from her *dreadful* heart. When she met her son, she embraced him, saying, "Oh ! my son, you do not know my heart. The old serpent, covered with the mould of the grave, is coiled up there. He has pierced it through and through, till there is not one little sound spot in it. Its odor, that of the bottomless pit, comes up in my nostrils. How can I bear it ?"

It was now the happy son's privilege to point his mother to the Lamb of God. But she moved toward Calvary with slow steps. She seemed to feel, for weeks, that no sounds but the thunderings of Sinai were for her. But she did, at length, believe as well as tremble. She had comfort,—was a lover of prayer, and of every Christian duty; still she had many dark hours. There was hope, and there was fear; there was light, and there was shade, in her path.

For three years she thus followed her Saviour. But, early in 1849, new light broke into her soul. Her own simple words best tell the story of the change in her feelings. "Three years ago, I saw Christ in heaven, and I have seen Him there ever since; but now, he sits by my side all the day long."

From that time she became a most active

Christian. Those who knew her during that season of revival can never forget her deep anxiety for her husband, nor her joy at seeing him "clothed and in his right mind." Nor can we ever cease to remember the fervor of her prayers, in the female prayer-meeting, nor the scores of women she carried to *her closet* to entreat them there to be reconciled to Christ. She was now indeed a "mother in Israel," caring tenderly for all the true Israel, and seeking to have "added to" it "daily." The young preachers were very dear to her. She could not give them a *Prophet's chamber*, but she made her whole house a great reception-room for the young servants of the living God, and when wearied with labors they would often say, "Let us go and see the Pilgrim and his wife; we shall there get rest for both soul and body." They would often remark, "We have no such help in revivals as this father and mother."

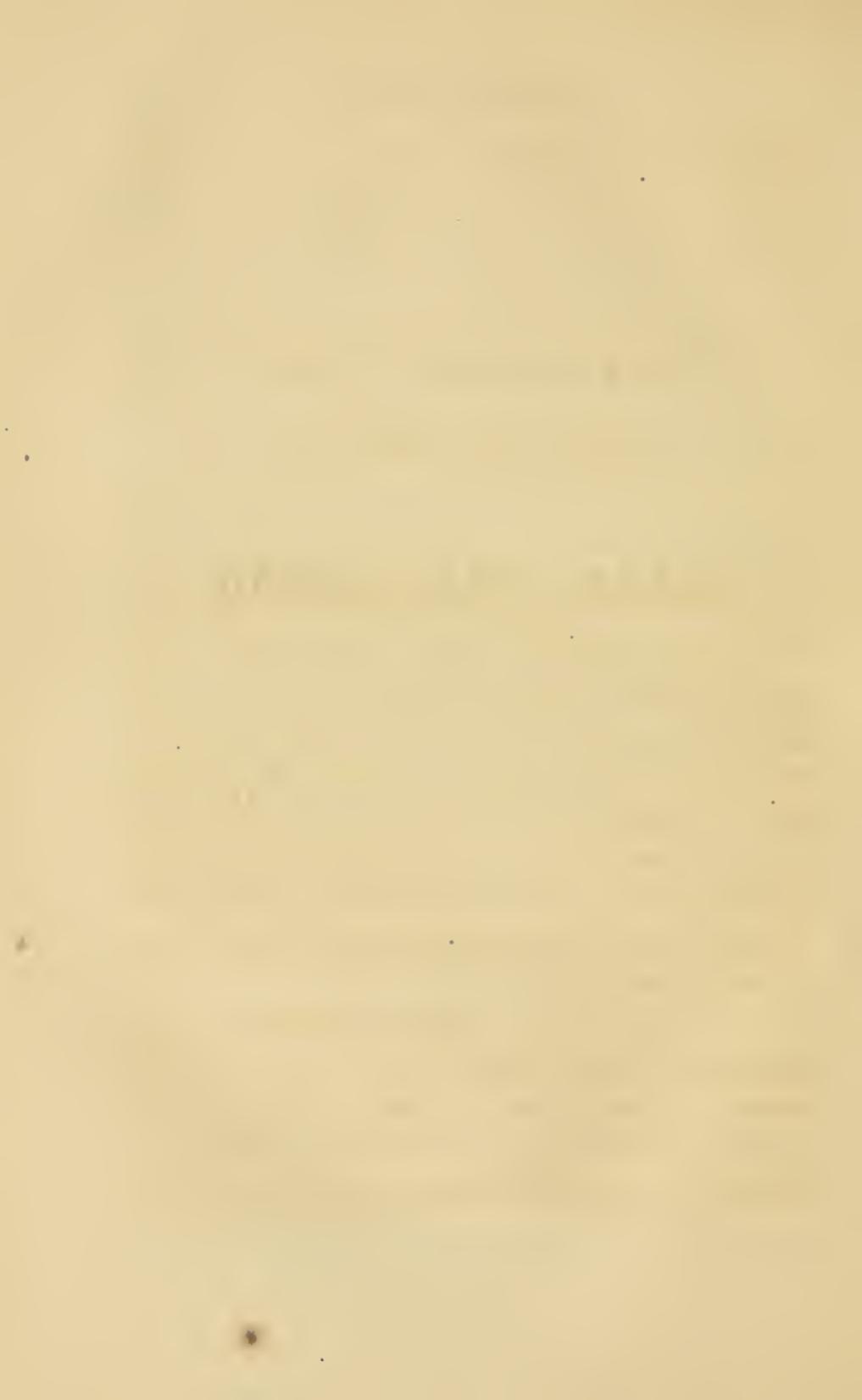
These aged pilgrims were in life long united, and in death scarcely divided. "The good man of the house" gone, his wife waited her summons, sure that she should soon be called for. In this, she was not disappointed. The Sabbath after his death found her children again assembled, to see their mother go up to the celestial city. "The stronger, brighter angel, who loved her best," had

come; and, early on Monday morning, he bore her away to the realms of bliss.

Her disease, the cholera, gave her little opportunity to speak; but it was evident to all, that her last twenty-four hours were filled with glorious views of her Saviour. She seemed much of the time unconscious, but was probably not so; for to every inquiry after her state, she would promptly reply, "I am going after Jesus."

Happy soul! she found him soon; and, joined with her honored husband, she shall go no more out from the Saviour's presence forever. She shall no more feel that she dwells in the *Pilgrim's house*; her abode is the dwelling of the eternal God. There she waits the coming of her godly seed, who are being fast brought into the kingdom.

SAYAD, THE JOINER.



## SAYAD, THE JOINER.

BY REV. AUSTIN H. WRIGHT, M. D.

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SAYAD was a neighbor of Meerza the musician, noticed in a preceding sketch. Their houses were adjoining each other, and their yards were connected by a door. They were consequently intimate; and there is reason to suppose that Meerza, after his conversion, often called the attention of his friend and neighbor to the great subject which so possessed his own soul, and his peaceful and happy death must have produced a decided impression upon him.

He had been an occasional attendant on the preaching of the Gospel for some years, and had manifested some interest in Divine things; but it is not known that he was brought seriously to reflect on his eternal concerns, until the winter of

1848-9. At that period, the Nestorians were favored with a gracious visitation from the presence of the Lord. Meetings for prayer and exhortation were held every night on the mission premises; and, such was the power of eternal realities over those who attended, that often the whole assembly was melted to tears.

Sayad was a regular attendant at these meetings, and very often he sobbed and cried like a little child. It is stated by one who saw much of him then, that for a month he appeared to be weeping most of the time. Wherever meetings were held for preaching or prayer, whether on the mission premises, or in the houses of the people in a Nestorian quarter of the city, or in the church, there he was sure to be found. His conversation and deportment were entirely changed, and he appeared to walk with God.

Sayad, like Meerza, was a very poor man, and had great difficulty in obtaining the necessaries of life for himself and family. The writer loaned him a small sum of money, on one occasion, which had been committed to him in trust, and it was pleasing to notice his anxiety to return it punctually when it became due. This feature was peculiarly noticeable in this country, where punctuality in pecuniary

transactions is scarcely known. He once said, "Though I am poor, I wish to act as a Christian man in all my business."

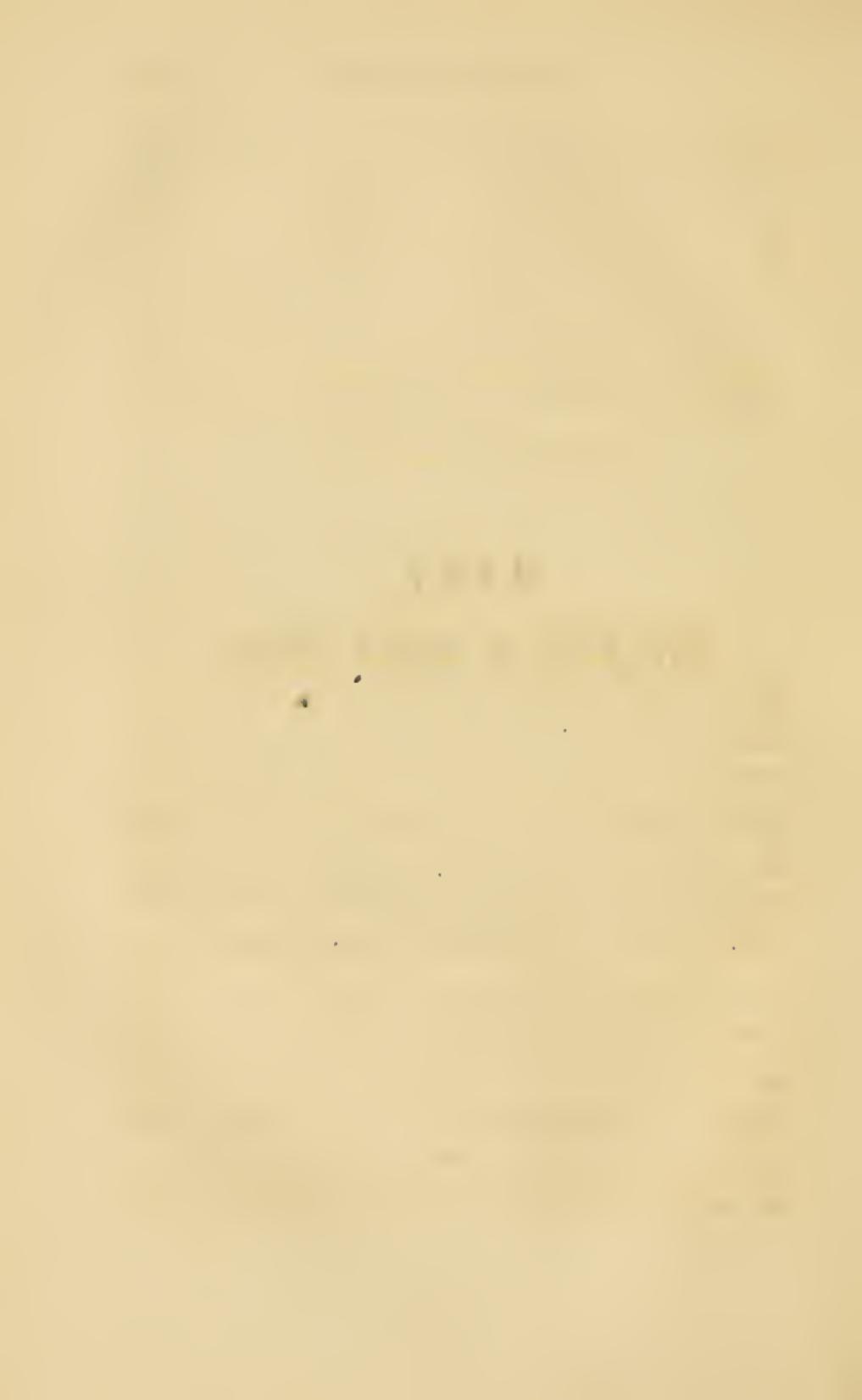
One season, Sayad went to Khoy, a town about one hundred miles distant from Oroomiah, to work at his trade. There he had no opportunity to hear the Gospel. On his return, he listened to the Word with increased relish. After hearing a sermon, one Sabbath, he said to the preacher, as they walked home together, "I thank God that I did not die at Khoy, and that I am permitted to hear the truth again."

Sayad's poverty brought with it great temptations. At one time, his pious friends were apprehensive that he might wander away and perish. He was less regular at the place of preaching and prayer; and, from some misunderstanding in relation to a piece of work he was employed to do on our mission premises, he became disaffected. He was not as careful in the observance of the Sabbath as he ought to have been. Still it is the decided testimony of those who knew him best, that he was a godly man, and that in all his trials and temptations the love and the fear of God were operating on his heart. His affections appeared to be set upon things above, while he was struggling along in the world.

But Sayad was not left long to contend with trial and temptation here below. In November 1852, he took cold, which settled upon his lungs; but his friends did not regard him as so seriously ill for several days as to call for medical assistance. Early one morning I was requested to visit him. I found him struggling for breath, and evidently near his end. His mind was clear. I said to him, "Sayad, do you trust in Christ?" He replied distinctly, "Yes;" and raising his eyes upward, added, "If it be His pleasure that I should die now, I trust that I am ready." Adding a few words to fix his mind on Christ, I left him in order to get some medicine to relieve him, if possible. Priest Eshoo, one of our pious helpers, hastened to his side to comfort and pray with him, but arrived too late. The good man had closed his eyes upon earthly scenes, and, as we trust, opened them upon the bright glories of heaven. He was about fifty years of age at the time of his death.

MARY,

THE WIFE OF PRIEST ASLAN.



## MARY, THE WIFE OF PRIEST ASLAN.

BY REV. JUSTIN PERKINS, D. D.

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WE are accustomed to associate whatever is gentle and lovely in female character with the name of *Mary*. This doubtless arises from the peculiar distinction and honor conferred on her who was the “blessed among women,” in being the mother of Jesus; as also from the recollection of that Mary who sat at the Saviour’s feet to hear his word, and chose the good part which should never be taken from her. And, though a contemporary Mary among the Jews was of so diverse a character as to be the tenement of “seven devils,” neither this associated circumstance, nor the familiar records of “bloody Mary” of martyr memory, nor the unamiable dispositions of more modern Marys within the circle of our acquaintance and observation, materially mars

the sweet fragrance which this very common and favorite name diffuses over our minds.

Mary, or *Myriam*, as the Nestorians write the name, in a language nearly allied to the Hebrew, (or in their more familiar, abbreviated form, *Monny*,) the subject of this brief sketch, was a woman whose character well harmonized with the grateful associations which cluster around that cherished name. She was naturally of a modest, retiring, and gentle disposition,— traits as interesting as they are uncommon in a benighted Eastern land, where, amid the general moral ruins, the ordinary character of woman, notwithstanding her cruel oppression and seclusion, is far enough from being either gentle or amiable.

Myriam came to reside at Seir in the autumn of 1843, as the wife of Priest Aslan, the copyist for the mission Press. She was then about twenty years of age. United with her natural amiability were singular energy and efficiency in the care and management of her household,— a task which, among all but the wealthy and noble in these countries, imposes on the female many a hard and servile burden,— the wife and mother being, in fact, the common drudge of the family. All this was patiently met by Myriam; and it is worthy of note that her

husband, naturally a passionate, unreasonable, and captious man, though at length softened by the grace of God, was tenderly devoted to her from real esteem and affection, and was often heard to utter her praise,—a thing the more interesting, where the avowal of conjugal regard is even more uncommon than its existence.

Myriam was a constant and attentive listener to the truth on the Sabbath from the time she came to Seir, but I am not aware that she was deeply concerned for her soul till the revival among the Nestorians of 1849. She was among the first of the females of the village known to be under deep conviction of sin in that revival, several of whom hoped that they passed from death unto life. Her convictions of sin were very pungent and searching, and continued such for several days before she found peace in believing. Then Christ appeared to her unspeakably precious, the chief among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely; and her joy and peace were now as great as had been her sorrow and distress. Like *that Mary* who washed the Saviour's feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, she loved much because she felt that much had been forgiven her.

From that period onward, during the remaining four years of her life, Myriam was a decided, hum-

ble, and consistent Christian,—by far the most so of any of the females of the village of Seir, who then indulged the hope of conversion. She was known to be habitually prayerful in her house and her closet, and was remarkably humble and peaceful in her intercourse with her female neighbors,—a character not easily maintained where people are huddled so thickly together as is the case in Nestorian villages, in which the houses not only join each other, but several usually open into the same yard. She exerted herself to keep up a weekly female prayer-meeting at her own house, as much of the time as she could induce others to assemble for that purpose. And her general walk and conversation were such as beautifully to exemplify the religion of the Gospel. She was, indeed, a shining light in her household and in the village.

Soon after Myriam became hopefully pious, she commenced learning to read with other females in the Sabbath school, that she might be able to read the word of life for herself. Her diligence and success in learning were greater than could reasonably have been anticipated under the manifold burdens of her household cares, though from these hindrances she never became able to read very fluently.

In the summer of 1852, Rebecca, Myriam's first-born, a fine child about ten years old, was suddenly

seized and cut down by that dreadful disease, the *cholera*. That was a terrible blow to Myriam. Rebecca was the light of her eyes, and the joy of her heart. How many years had she toiled and done all her work alone, for the sake of keeping that loved child in school! How often had she prayed with her, and pointed her to the Saviour of sinners; while the beloved child would in turn read the Bible and other good books to her devoted mother! Now these earthly joys and fond hopes are all blighted as in a moment; and no solace is found for that desolate mother's heart, but in the trembling hope that her Rebecca was not lost, but saved, and the sweet consolation which a God of all comfort is wont to impart to the riven heart of the bereaved parent. The meek submission and resignation exemplified by Myriam in her sore bereavement were a model for mourners. Not a murmuring word escaped her lips, nor did she betray any excessive manifestation of her deep and almost overwhelming grief; a fact the more worthy of notice in a land where death, in addition to its ordinary terrors, usually fills the households and the neighborhoods which it visits with unrestrained and frantic wailings.

It was not for Myriam to remain long a mourner. A few months after her loved daughter's removal she was herself laid upon a bed of sickness and of

death. Her bodily sufferings were severe and protracted, but her confidence and her joy in the Lord were ample to sustain her under them, and even to disarm the grim messenger, death, of his terrors. The writer of this sketch visited her on the last day of her life. She was then unable distinctly to articulate, but she perfectly comprehended my remarks, as she assured me by signs. A heavenly peace beamed from her emaciated countenance ; and, as I rose from prayer by her humble bed, with great effort she uttered her gratification at being thus commended to the Saviour, and her longing desire to depart and be with him.

I cannot more appropriately fill out this sketch than by introducing a brief notice of Myriam, as furnished by her stricken husband, which is as follows, namely: "When God poured out his mercy upon the little village of Seir, there was a very powerful awakening, and Myriam was awakened. With longing of soul she cast herself before the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. That dear Lamb, by his free grace, opened the eyes of her heart, that had been blinded by the devil. Daily, when she went to her closet to pray, on returning to her family it was very evident to me that she had shed many tears. If an idle word escaped her lips, she would go right to her closet and pray to be forgiven for that idle

word. When her brother came occasionally to visit her, she would take him (an adult young man) with her to her closet, and pray with him with deep feeling. She was also very faithful in her family, and trained well her children in the fear of God. She had no longer any righteousness of her own; Christ alone was her righteousness. Whenever preachers came to her house, she received them with great joy, and eagerly listened to them, and kneeled with them in prayer. And whenever she saw a member of the Seminary who did not set a good example, she would reprove him face to face.

“When she was laid upon her bed of sickness twenty-six days and nights, I myself attended her. I would say to her, ‘Are you willing to die?’ Her answer to me was: ‘I am very willing, if Christ accept me.’ I would say to her, ‘What then will become of your children?’ She would say to me, ‘The Lord will take care of them.’ She would also say, ‘Not children, nor any thing else is before my eyes, but Christ.’ Sometimes she would say, ‘If the Lord should again pardon and raise me up, I would try better to requite his goodness.’ She was much in prayer, and often commended her soul to Christ. She never complained of her sickness. I only one day heard her complain of her medicine, on taking which she twice fainted.

I used to ask her about death. From the first day of her sickness she was convinced that she should die; she had no hope that she would recover. When Mr. Stoddard used to come to see her and prescribe for her, she would eagerly welcome him, and would say, 'I thank him;' and when Mrs. Perkins and Mrs. Cochran and Mrs. Stoddard came to visit her, she greatly rejoiced.

"When Dr. Wright came to see her, I said to him, 'Why do you not give her medicine?' He said, 'Priest Aslan, medicine will no longer do her any good.' I said to him, weeping, 'What then will become of these children?' He replied to me, 'Priest Aslan, the Lord will be their father and their mother.' After the doctor left, I asked her, 'Are you ready for death?' She cheerfully replied, 'Yes.' Her disease mightily prevailed, and her voice was gone.

"On Sabbath evening Mr. Stoddard came, and Mrs. Stoddard with him. He inquired whether she had committed her soul to Christ. She replied, 'Yes.' He said to her, 'Do you wish me to pray with you?' and she greatly rejoiced to hear him pray. After a little, Mr. Perkins came. She was very low. He said to her, 'Myriam, how do you do? Do you desire to be with Christ?' She replied, 'Yes.' He said to her, 'Do you wish me

to pray with you?' By nodding her head, she answered, 'Yes.' When Mr. Perkins finished praying, she said, 'O blessed, O blessed!'

"During Sabbath night she was very nigh unto death; and I was satisfied that she was gazing on the angels. I said to her, 'You are dying?' She replied, 'Who told you that I am dying?' I added, 'A little only remains, and you will leave this world. Do you wish to see the children?' She said, 'Yes.' When her son and daughter were brought to her, she clasped them to her bosom, and kissed them and wept, and we all wept.

"When her brother inquired of her, Myriam, sister, 'Are you dying?' She replied, 'Brother, don't weep; the will of the Lord be done.' I was sitting at her head, and her breath seemed nearly gone. Her color changed; her feet were cold, and her pulse ceased. I said to her, 'Myriam, do you see Jesus?' She said, 'Yes.' I said, 'Has he accepted you?' She replied, 'Yes.' I also inquired, 'Is death bitter?' She answered, 'It was bitter to Christ, and is also bitter to me.' Just before she departed I waked her brother and sister, and her brother's wife, and we all wept together. In a low whisper she tried to restrain our weeping. I again inquired, 'Have you no fear of death?' She replied,

‘No;’ and after five minutes, she resigned her spirit.

“I have a sure hope that she is with Christ. May our Lord Jesus grant to all our brethren and sisters such a part in his kingdom! She died on Monday, February 2, 1854, aged about thirty years.”

From long and rather intimate acquaintance with Myriam, the wife of Priest Aslan, over whom it was my privilege to watch pastorally as one of my missionary flock, I can with confidence state my belief that this account of her by her bereaved husband is strictly correct. Seldom have I stood by the bed of a dying believer, whose Christian walk had been more “according to godliness,” and whose feet seemed more firmly planted on the Rock of Ages in the final conflict. “To the poor the gospel is preached;” and “blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

O S H A N A , O F T E K H O M A .



## OSHANA, OF TEKHOMA.

BY REV. DAVID T. STODDARD.

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In the heart of Koordistan, on one of the tributaries of the river Zab, is a small but very pleasant valley, surrounded by high mountains, from several of which the snow rarely disappears. This is the Alpine district of Tekhoma, containing five Nestorian villages, and about as many thousand people. In this spot, shut out from the world, they gather a livelihood from their numerous flocks and herds, and from a very economical cultivation of the soil, which is limited in amount, and rises in tastefully walled terraces, so that nearly every foot is brought under cultivation. Their fathers were no doubt driven to these mountain fastnesses by bloody persecution; and here, for many generations, their descendants have until recently kept up a kind of independence. They are both hardy and brave; and, being situated among their natural enemies,

the Koords, are often involved in deadly quarrels. The ignorance of the mass of the people is very great, and their religion, though retaining an appearance of simplicity, is a compound of gross superstitions. We have yet been able to do little for this district, except to educate a few of its promising youth, whom we are now about to send back there to scatter the bread of life. One of the Tekhomians, thus connected with us, was Oshana, the subject of this sketch.

The father of Oshana was Boodugh, of the village of Muzraiga. He was a priest, and reputed to be the most learned man of the district, though his learning amounted to no more than an ability to read fluently the ancient Syriac, and to translate with more or less readiness into the modern. We have no reason to suppose that he made any efforts to enlighten his people, or even to instruct his own children; though the latter, by hearing their father called a Rabbi, and by watching him as he pored over his old manuscript books, had some desire early awakened to become "learned" also.

In the autumn of 1846, the fierce Koordish chief, Bader Khan Bey, having three years before sacked the adjoining valley of Tiary, laid a plan to subdue and pillage the people of Tekhoma. The Nestorians there had repeatedly provoked the Koords

to aggression, trusting to their own well-known bravery, and ridiculing the idea that any one would venture to attack them in their strong-holds. They had, however, some previous intimations of the approach of Bader Khan Bey's army, and time to make some unusual preparation for resistance.

But they had greatly mistaken the foe with whom they had to deal. The Koords swept through the valley like a tornado, and resistance was utterly vain. Their villages were sacked and burnt, many thousands of sheep and cattle driven away, and their families scattered as chaff before the wind. No pity was shown to age or sex. The young and vigorous were dragged into captivity, while infants and the aged and infirm were butchered without remorse. Children, tossed into the air, were cut in two while falling. Some lost their arms, by the merciless twisting of cords which bound them. Some had their breasts stamped with redhot irons. The hearts of miserable victims were torn out before they ceased to beat. Many died under the tortures inflicted by their cruel invaders, in the hope of compelling them to disclose their treasures. The smiling homes of Tekhoma became a desolation, and those who survived this wholesale massacre were made houseless, half-naked, starving wanderers. It drew tears from our eyes to see these unhappy

beings flock down to us and their more favored brethren on the plain of Oroomiah, pleading for a morsel of bread and a shelter from the storms of the approaching winter.

The father and mother of Oshana fled in terror with their children on the approach of the Koords, and took refuge in a ravine high up the mountain side. The father, having thus looked after the safety of his family, felt that he must venture down, with his wife, to secure his library, which, consisting of ancient Syriac manuscripts, he regarded with very peculiar affection. Leaving their three children, Shlemon, (Solomon,) Oshana, (Hosanna,) and Gulee,\* (the Rose,) in the care of a sick uncle, they set out on their perilous enterprise, but were soon despatched by the daggers of the Koords.

The ruffians next discovered the hiding-place of this afflicted family. The sick uncle and the orphan children were again compelled to flee for their lives. Shlemon undertook to carry his little sister Gulee on his shoulders; but being himself a mere child, his strength soon gave way, and his failing limbs trembled under their burden. The uncle, apprehending that both of the children might

\* It may be well to state here, that this Shlemon is about to graduate in our Male Seminary, and that Gulee is a very intelligent and interesting member of the Female Seminary.

thus fall into the hands of their pursuers, directed Shlemon to abandon his little sister, and try only to save himself. Shlemon obeyed with many tears, and clambered on in wild affright over the rocks and precipices. Owing to their superior knowledge of the country, they were at last able to evade the bloodthirsty Koords, and to reach a place where they could breathe freely. A kind Providence also watched over Gulee, who, with another little girl, was saved, they hardly knew how, and was afterwards found among the smouldering ruins of the Tekhomian villages.

After eight days of plunder, the Koordish hordes withdrew from the district. Meantime the fugitives wandered about, with no food but such roots as they could find, and nearly died of starvation. Nor was their condition much improved, as one straggling company after another found their way back to their pillaged and desolate homes.

The number who perished in this massacre is not certainly known, but has been estimated at about seven hundred persons. Of these, eight were priests, and a number of deacons. There was probably not a family which did not weep over its dead.

Shlemon and Oshana, some time after this, came down to Oroomiah, and immediately sought

admission to our schools. Shlemon, being the older and more intelligent, was soon prepared for the Seminary, while Oshana did not enter it until the fall of 1852, when he was perhaps fifteen years old. Until this time we had not known much of him personally. His manner was reserved, and he was evidently very distrustful of himself. His companions thought him sullen; but we are inclined to think this appearance may have been in consequence of epileptic fits, to which he was more or less subject. As a scholar he was quiet and studious, though he gave no evidence of uncommon abilities.

In the spring of 1853 a deep religious interest pervaded the school, and Oshana was brought under conviction of sin. His exercises, for weeks, were quite marked; and from that time he appeared to be a greatly changed boy. He was now humble, conscientious, and prayerful; and his brother Shlemon, who had been hopefully converted some years previous, took great comfort in walking with him in the way to heaven. We hoped that they might long be companions, and return together to their native mountains to labor side by side for their poor people. But the plans of God were very different from our own in regard to Oshana.

About six months after this great change, he was

seized with typhus fever, which rapidly hurried him to the grave. Shlemon watched with the greatest anxiety night and day by his bedside, and during the latter part of his sickness, Gulee, his sister, came and shared with him in this labor of love. It was most affecting to see the attachment of these orphans to their sick brother, and the earnestness with which they gazed at the countenance of the doctor when he sat by his sick-bed.

During his illness of about two weeks there was nothing of very special interest in Oshana's religious feelings, till three days before his death. He would indeed often desire us to pray with him, and express his gratitude when we closed; but both body and mind were evidently borne down by the power of his disease. The Sabbath, however, preceding his death, was a day we cannot soon forget. At the close of the afternoon service, Mr. Perkins and I went and sat with him for an hour. In reply to our questions, he said he did not want to get well; he wanted to go and be with Christ. He then requested that prayer might be offered. We all kneeled down, and I commended the sick one to our gracious Lord. When I closed, he asked Mr. Perkins to pray. As we rose from our knees, he looked most earnestly upward, stretched out his wasted hands, and almost

started from his bed. Mr. Perkins inquired, "Whom do you see?" "Jesus," he replied. "Where is he?" "There he is," said he, significantly, pointing upwards. "I wish to go to him; I wish to embrace him. I do not wish to get well." A little after, he suddenly exclaimed, "I see Judith Perkins, I see Gewergis.\* They are near me. They are clothed in white. Do not *you* see them? O how blessed they are!"

I state these facts without extended comment. Some readers may possibly think these expressions of the dying boy the mere result of an excited imagination, while others will recognize in them a vision of heavenly glory opened before him. The effect on those of us who were present was at least very sweet and solemnizing, and we felt as if we ourselves could catch near glimpses of the redeemed, and listen to their songs of praise. Why may it not be, that, when the soul trembles on the brink of Jordan, the veil is sometimes for a moment lifted, and a ravishing sight given of the heavenly Canaan? Is this unphilosophical? Is it unscriptural? I cannot believe it.

After this time the natives entirely gave up hope that Oshana would recover, and little Gulee said she did not *wish* to have him. She would rather

\* See page 125, in regard to Gewergis.

he would go to his heavenly home. All felt, that, having been favored with such blessed prospects, he had no more to do with earth.

The same evening, he was extremely exhausted, and seemed to be dying. He however rallied on Monday and Tuesday, and some symptoms were more favorable. He was again at times full of happy emotions, looking up and repeating to himself, "I see Judith; I see Gewergis; I see the Saviour. O what blessedness!"

On Wednesday morning, September 14, 1853, about breakfast time, it was evident that death had laid his icy hand upon him, and we gathered round his bedside to see him breathe his last. After lingering an hour, his breath gradually grew shorter and his pulse fainter, and he passed away without a struggle from earth to heaven.

The funeral services were performed in the school-room of the Seminary; and, although it was vacation, a number of Oshana's companions, our pupils, were able to be present on the interesting occasion. Priest Eshoo, who is a mountaineer, preached the sermon, in accordance with the request of Oshana when dying. The coffin was placed before the desk, and the orphan brother and sister, Shlemon and Gulee, sat near, quite unable to repress their loud sobs.

From the school-room we walked slowly to the grave, which had been prepared on a beautiful rising ground near our premises, and which commands a very extensive and charming view of the plain and city of Oroomiah, the distant lake studded with islands, and the more distant mountains. There sleeps our beloved Judith Grant Perkins, "The Persian Flower," by the account of whose early and triumphant death so many thousand hearts have been touched. There, this very week,\* we have laid the first-born, the only child of our afflicted sister, Mrs. Crane. There, a row of white stones marks the resting-place of Gewergis, Iwaz, and others of our pupils who sleep in Jesus; and there, we hope ourselves to lie, when we have finished our work and closed our eyes in death. It will be pleasant to have our graves so near the graves of these dear pupils, and no less pleasant to rise with them at the last day. The thought of "dying among our kindred" may be indeed grateful to our natural feelings; but the thought is far more grateful to the missionary of dying among those to whom he has devoted all his energies; of having his grave a testimony of his affection for them and care for their souls long after his tongue is motionless in death.

\* September 4, 1854.

BABOOSHA,  
THE YOUNG SOLDIER.



## BABOOSHA, THE YOUNG SOLDIER.

BY REV. JOSEPH G. COCHRAN.

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EAST and south-east of Mount Seir, and extending nearly twenty-five miles to the charming lake of Oroomiah, lies the pleasant and highly productive plain of Barandooz, a section of the plain of Oroomiah, partly separated from the rest by a projecting spur of the Koordish mountains. It is amply irrigated by a beautiful perennial stream, and contains about thirty Nestorian villages, large and small, interspersed among a more numerous Mussulman population.

This district, though so highly favored by nature, is, for several reasons, morally the wildest, and until recently the least cultivated, portion of the great plain of Oroomiah. The bishop, Mar Gabriel, whom the people receive as their spiritual head, whose hand the young and old are taught reverently to

kiss, and whose benediction they crave, as did the ancient Jews the patriarchal blessing, sustains the character of an habitual inebriate and shameless debauchee. His religion is valued by himself only in proportion as it contributes to his coffers; and to make it tributary in this respect, he can assume any phase among his people, or condescend to any unworthy artifice.

As matter of course, the example and influence of such a man cannot fail to be detrimental to the growth of every moral and practical religious sentiment.

Another demoralizing influence, that has long been brought to bear upon this unfortunate people, is the following. On the south-western corner of the district reside a tribe of Persian outlaws, called *Hallaj*. They are professional robbers, and were some years ago banished from the eastern boundary of the empire, and sentenced to reside on this border district, facing their national and equally predatory enemies, the Koords; while on the southern portion of the plain, various tribes of plundering Koords are found, many families of whom are interspersed among the Nestorian population. Such proximity to these barbarous clans has not failed to produce its moral blight. It is now but too notorious, that until recently, at least, many Nestorians, not excepting

ecclesiastics, have been in the habit of plundering the highways in the disguise of their bloody neighbors, and this with the connivance of all classes of their people.

Barandooz is, consequently, a peculiarly hard soil for the gospel husbandman; and as such would not be expected to produce much ripe fruit from the divided and occasional labors of the missionary for a few years. But the gospel has still, in some measure and in various ways, made its impression and won its blessed victories there; and it is from the moral darkness of such a community that I wish to hold up to the reader the humble and pleasing example of a young soldier, the subject of this sketch.

The residence of this amiable young man, Ba-boosha by name, was Dizzatakka, a central and populous village on the plain of Barandooz. This village has enjoyed the occasional and irregular labors of our mission for several years, and for the last four or five years the stated ministrations of the gospel once or more every Sabbath. Recently it has been selected as an out-station, where Deacon Joseph, and his companion, Sanem, both very promising graduates of our Seminaries, and well qualified helpers, have been located. In this village resides also an intelligent and influential priest, who has

been for several years the teacher of the village school, and gives some evidence of personal piety. Two of its young men have also enjoyed the privileges of our Male Seminary. With these exceptions, and that of the young man to whom I would call the reader's attention, not an individual was found, up to the spring of 1853, who manifested a desire to read, or to learn more perfectly this, to them, new way of salvation by the blood of the cross, instead of church rites and senseless mummeries. In the autumn previous to the above date, Baboosha was, much against his wishes, impressed as a soldier, and hastily summoned to Tehrân, the capital of the kingdom, a distance of more than five hundred miles. This was probably the crisis of his life. His religious privileges and means of grace, now receding from his sight, appeared in a new light, and began to awaken painful and anxious emotions. In such circumstances, his ardent youthful feelings, and his vague aspirations for a more lasting good than earth can bestow, may be more easily conjectured than described.

By the merciful providence of Him who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will, it was ordered that a young man, a native of his village, who had for a limited time been connected with our Seminary, and who gave some evidence of

a change of heart, should accompany Baboosha in the same detachment of soldiers. It was an opportunity too good to be lost; and, unsolicited by any mortal, Baboosha procured three small books, which he carefully packed away in his knapsack, hoping, with the assistance of his fellow-soldier, to be enabled to learn to read. Having reached Tehrân, he found his companion more than willing to render him the aid he desired. Every Sabbath, and many a leisure weekday during the winter, found these two young men separated from their idle and vicious companions, and employed in deciphering the newly printed characters of the vernacular Syriae.

At length the toilsome process of learning the alphabet and familiarizing his unpractised eye to the written character was finished. The printed words became invested with intelligible significance. The sacred page was unsealed to his enraptured vision; and the young soldier was furnished with the Word of God, the higher code of his moral warfare.

Thus several months passed away, after which his detachment, in consequence of the appearance of the cholera in camp, received the welcome permission to return to their homes. And what was the joy of Baboosha on reaching his native village to find that

a Sabbath school had been opened there, and that several adults were engaged in the pleasing work which he of his own accord, and at the expense of many a jeer from his ungodly associates, had successfully accomplished. I need not state that the following Sabbath found him in his place, an interested student of the Word of God; and subsequently among the few who could rise in their places and recite the verses which they had committed to memory, none were more prompt and enthusiastic than this young soldier.

But, in the mysterious providence of God, only a few such golden Sabbaths were allowed to Baboosha. The typhus fever, which in this country is with fearful emphasis a pestilence that walketh in darkness and destruction that wasteth at noon-day, entered his dwelling; and in a few days, and before the alternate Sabbath on which it was the privilege of the writer to visit his village, he was called away to his long home. His death occurred in October, 1853, his age being about eighteen years. But he died not as the fool dieth, nor was his end, as we trust, like his. An unwonted scene was witnessed around his dying couch. His thoughtless and godless family were warned of an approaching judgment and an unchanging eternity. And

friends and companions, that approached to drop the tear of affection, were kindly and earnestly admonished to prepare for a like solemn hour.

The priest of the village, to whom allusion has been made, was received with kisses of mingled affection and reverence. "I love you all," exclaimed the dying young man; "but henceforth I know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified."

Nor were the Sabbath school, and other means of grace, forgotten in the dying hour. Never had they appeared to him so important. Never before had his lips been so opened to urge their claims on his thoughtless associates. Four or five nights before he died, he dreamed, or fancied that he dreamed, that the Saviour visited him arrayed in shining apparel, and bearing in his hand a golden cup, which he graciously presented to his lips, saying, "Whosoever shall drink of the water that I give him, shall never thirst again." The dying young man dreamed that he drank of that cup; and the blissful vision assumed so much of a reality to his ardent oriental temperament and uncultivated mind, that, though he survived several days, he could never afterward be persuaded to swallow a drop of water. When urged to drink,

he would reply, "I have drank of the water of life from Jesus' hand, and I shall never thirst again."

Such were some of the pleasing evidences of the rapid germination and maturing of the seed which had, by a peculiar providence, been lodged in his neart. How is the grace of the gospel magnified by such instances of its triumph! This young man was in the impetuous glow of opening manhood, surrounded by wicked companions, in a village where but a few rays of gospel light had shined. He was subsequently exposed to the peculiar temptations of a soldier's life; and yet the voice of Infinite Wisdom availed to call him away from scenes of dissipation to the effort of persevering study; to the Sabbath school; to the religious service; and finally, as we may trust, to a happy and triumphant dying hour and a blessed immortality. Would that gospel privileges were always as well appreciated, and their fruits as palpable, in more enlightened and more favored lands!

DEACON MEVRAS.



## DEACON MEVRAS — A LIGHT IN THE CAMP.

BY REV. JOSEPH G. COCHRAN.

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FOLLOWING the foregoing sketch of the young soldier, we introduce a brief notice of the teacher and fellow-soldier of Baboosha, who, a few weeks subsequently to the decease of the latter, was, under very afflictive circumstances, cut down by the same disease — typhus fever — contracted probably in the pestilential climate of central Persia.

Deacon Mevras had, as has been intimated, enjoyed the privileges of our Seminary for a limited time. During his connection with us, he proved himself an amiable youth and an industrious scholar. In some of his studies he excelled, and in general gave promise of more than ordinary scholarship. He was also of a serious turn of mind, and showed a ready susceptibility to the new

influences and scenes into which he was introduced. At an early period of the session, he gave evidence of being awakened to a sense of his sins, and need of pardon through atoning blood.

Subsequently, Oshana, one of the teachers in the Seminary, a pious and discriminating young man, wished to spend a Sabbath in Dizzatakka, the village of Mevras, and requested the latter to accompany him. In their walk of ten miles, much of the time was taken up in religious conversation; and this young deacon so clearly described his former feelings, his recent experiences and present purposes, as to give to his teacher satisfactory evidence of having passed from death unto life. Though not always under our supervision afterward, yet, so far as we know, no instance of reprehensible conduct, or of a walk and conversation incompatible with the profession of godliness, is remembered against him from that period till the time of his death.

Just before his leaving the Seminary, an older brother was drafted for the army; and, on Mevras's return home, his family insisted on his taking the place of his brother, who was incumbered with a large family. This event was hardly less trying to the superintendents of the Seminary, than it was

to the pious feelings and ardent thirst for knowledge of their youthful pupil. Deacon Mevras had an utter aversion to the employment and temptations of the camp, and most pertinaciously remonstrated against the demands of his parents, and petitioned, though to no effect, to the authorities, as well as to our mission, to be released from this dreaded employment.\* But his parents being inexorable, and no one able to afford him succor, he was at length coerced into submission, not however until he had been cruelly beaten by the merciless officers of government, for his failure, as they asserted, properly to comprehend the claims which his country had on him for military service.

At this juncture his regiment was summarily ordered to Tabreez, with the probability that they would be sent to the distant province of Khorasan, where insurrectionary movements demanded a reinforcement of the army.

The hour arrived, and our young deacon was torn from home and friends to encounter the hard fortunes of Persian soldiery. When on his funeral march (as it seemed to him), to Tabreez, and three

\* The mission were in possession of a pledge from the authorities, that no member of the Seminary should be impressed; but this case being involved by the original enrolment of his brother, we felt that we could not interfere.

days' journey removed from the scenes and endearments of his youth, it was our unexpected pleasure again to enjoy an interview with him. The scene to us was in many respects a novel and interesting one. It was on a sultry May morning, when on a journey to Trebizon, that we chanced to overtake the principal part of this newly formed and scarcely fledged Nestorian regiment. The sight was unique, not to say ludicrous. The company was divided into knots of from ten to twenty in number, and scattered along the road for many miles. Their *uniform* appeared to consist in the utter *dissimilarity* of dress and equipage, save the general characteristics of the national costume, the full bag-like pantaloons and coarse frock, secured to the person by a leather girdle; the material of both garments being cheap cambric, and of almost every variety of color. A few were provided with rude muskets; others, with empty cartridge-boxes; and perhaps the majority had only the more familiar and reliable weapon,—a heavy walking-stick.

The feelings, with which these youthful groups were now leaving their native plain and entering upon this uncertain and hazardous expedition, must have been various in the extreme. Certainly their outward manifestations were in no small degree instructive as well as amusing. Some moved on

with heavy and taciturn tread, evidently brooding in sorrow over a stern necessity. Others, more hopeful and less reflective, tripped gaily along, indulging in the facetious jest and humorous sentimentalism, or sauntering up the hill-side which skirted the road, in quest of gaudy flowers with which fantastically to decorate their persons. Such was the recruit which the land of Cyrus had now summoned to fight its battles.

In this motley procession, Mevras, our pupil, was found. He was still smarting from the stripes he had received, and was borne down with grief at his apparently hard destiny. But the struggle was mainly over. His naturally strong spirit had yielded, and he now expressed a willingness to go where duty called. In parting from him, and reflecting on his prospects and exposures in an army where a single pious associate could not probably be found, the tears involuntarily flowed, and I felt that I had learned a new lesson of the essential injustice and cruelty that here prevail, as well as of the power and multiplicity of the temptations to which the disciple of our Lord is subjected in this land, “where Satan’s seat is.”

Fortunately, the regiment, instead of being ordered to join the main army, was soon dismissed from Tabreez, and Mevras, to his great joy, was per-

mitted to spend the succeeding summer in his native village. There he was in various ways usefully employed in promoting the cause of truth and righteousness. He was willing to "go out into the highways and hedges, and compel" (if possible) the people to come to the house of God, a work in this country scarcely less important, nor attended with less precious results, than preaching the Word. And after religious service in his own village, he was in the habit of going frequently to a neighboring village with his heavy quarto New Testament (the only edition then printed) under his arm, there to give utterance with trembling lips to the love he bore to his divine Master.

The following winter and spring were, as has been intimated, spent by Mevras at Tehrân. Of his bearing there, we have no further information than the fact of his very commendable efforts to teach his companion Baboosha to read. Were he, however, the happy instrument of winning that one immortal spirit to the love and obedience of the truth, his time was not spent in vain. But that his humble Christian example accomplished much more for the cause which was nearest his heart, the records of the judgment may reveal.

It was in the autumn of 1853, and some weeks after his return from Tehrân, that Deacon Mevras

was called, as we trust, to join his brother soldier in the land where palms of everlasting victory await the Christian warrior.

“Of a pleasant Sabbath morning in October,” says Deacon Joseph, our helper stationed in the village of Dizzattica, “Deacon Mevras was found unusually early in his place at a prayer-meeting, in which he as usual took a part, but before the meeting closed he seemed beside himself; and we then saw, though we did not fully realize it, that death was approaching. During his sickness of about a week I was much with him. The second day he remarked, ‘Blessed sickness, it brings me nearer to the Lord Jesus Christ.’ He called for the New Testament, and, after listening to a few verses, took it and put it under his pillow, whence he was unwilling to have it removed, frequently remarking, ‘I should not be happy unless my Bible were near.’ He spent much of his time in singing in a low voice the hymns of praise which he learned in the Seminary. He also prayed much every day. And always, when Priest Joseph or myself came in, he would ask us to pray and converse with him. He was frequently heard to say, ‘The fear of death is gone; my faith rests firmly on the Lord Jesus Christ.’ On the second Sabbath, when I visited him, I found

that he had just engaged in prayer. I saw that he was worse, and said to him, 'Do you know who is near the bed of death to give comfort and sustaining grace?' He replied, 'Christ will not leave us.' At his request, I prayed. After prayer, he said, 'God lives; Satan is vanquished; God has taken the sword out of the hands of the Koords and given it to Christ, and He shall reign forevermore.' Soon the hour for meeting arrived, and Mevras raised his head and reached out his hand for his Testament, saying, 'I must go to the church and preach once more.' He took the book, but was unable to rise, and sank back upon his couch unable to speak further. On the morrow he died. His death was very blessed."

Such is the artless language which our helper employs to indicate the peaceful death of Deacon Mevras. His age was about nineteen years.

How inexplicable the Providence that has thus, in the removal of these two youthful soldiers of the cross, quenched almost the only lights which the labors of God's servants have been instrumental in kindling in that remote village! But their pious example remains, and it is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit to invest it with an eloquence and power, which years of active labor to build up the

kingdom of our Lord might not have possessed. These departed believers are not lost. They live in the savor of their precious memory, and they live gloriously above, to illustrate and celebrate the riches of redeeming grace forever.



M A R O G E N,

THE PIPE-MAKER OF ISHTAZIN.



## MAROGEN, THE PIPE-MAKER OF ISHTAZIN.

BY REV. SAMUEL A. RHEA.

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THE valley of Ishtazin, in Jeloo, lies just under the snowy peaks of the loftiest mountains in Koordistan. A mountain torrent, now and then leaping with a wild roar over the massive ledges which would obstruct its course, dashes and foams along its rocky bed. On the gentle slopes of the mountains which rise up from its banks are little fields, terraced with immense toil, interspersed among fruit-trees, vines, and the wide spreading walnuts which abound in the valley; and all around, the mountains rear their massive piles in silent, majestic grandeur, combining a sublimity even terrible, with the soft features of the valley below. Among some of those loftiest peaks, the flocks browse and graze during the summer; and here, too, the peasant women harvest the wild grass and carry it down the steep

descent in large bundles on their backs; and often from those crags the avalanche, under the warm beams of the rising sun, breaks away and thunders down into the valley, sweeping before it terraced fields, trees, and houses in its desolating track.

In one of the five villages of this picturesque valley, and in one of the humblest abodes, lived and died the good old man who is the subject of this brief sketch. He was poor, very poor, in this world's goods, but we believe he was rich in faith. His patched and tattered garments bespoke his deep poverty, but he was an heir to Christ's unsearchable riches. His home was nothing more than a rude hut of cobble stones, but we trust he is now in one of the blessed mansions of the golden city. To see him hobbling along, half bent to the ground, one would think him indeed a pitiable object; but when he gave you the warm grasp of his hand, and you saw the happy smile which was ever wont to play about his features, and his fine black eye rested so calmly and benevolently upon you, your sympathy might be spared for one who seemed to have within him a well-spring of that peace which passeth all understanding, and of that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. God had passed by the proud nobles and bigoted ecclesiastics of his

people, and come and taken up his abode in that poor crippled body, and there wrought the wonders of his grace. Yes, he was a son of the greatest king; for he had that meek and quiet spirit which in his sight is of great price.

In giving some account of his early history, and his first religious impressions, referring to his crippled body, he said, "I was not always so. I was a tall, stout man, proud and passionate, always foremost in a fight, and in all the mountains there was no one who could revile and curse like me. But God broke my proud spirit. I went to Tiflis. There a dreadful disease laid hold of me, and for three long years I lay upon my bed, oftentimes racked with the keenest sufferings. God visited me in my tribulation. Away from home, and friends, a stranger in a strange land, he taught me to call upon his holy name. Strange to tell, I rose from that bed, which I thought would be to me the bed of death. But I was no longer the robust, stout man I once was. I got up with this crippled, helpless body, and hobbled my way over the long, toilsome road to my mountain home. My neighbors gathered around me; but they saw I had become a praying man, and they mocked and said, "He will make the Lord's head sick with his prayers." "Oh, no," said I, "he never gets tired of our praying."

In the journals of John, the devoted pastor of Geog Tapa, made during his tours in the mountains, we find some interesting notices of the good old pipe-maker. Speaking of him, under date of May 16, 1847, he says: "But that brother from Jeloo is far more filled with the fear of God. He did not permit us to be unoccupied at all. He was truly hungry and thirsty after righteousness, and always ready to hear us. His name is Marogen. He is a pipe-maker. The winter in which God visited us in Oroomiah and aroused us from our sins, one of these brethren belonging to the village (Memikan) about which I am speaking, whose name is Eshoo, came to us in Oroomiah. He was awakened to a sense of his lost condition, with crying and tears. That same winter, this brother from Jeloo went down to make pipes in Memikan. On the return of Eshoo from Oroomiah, he spoke to the people of his village about the great things which had taken place there. Then this Marogen was awakened by the Spirit of God while hearing these words. Afterwards, Khamis, (a pupil in the Seminary from Gawar,) went from Oroomiah and talked with him; and after a while Deacon Tamo also saw him. By and by he returned to his own province. Last fall, Khamis and I went from Gawar to visit him. No one of us brethren doubts

about his conversion by the Holy Spirit. We asked him many questions. He has not seen much, and has not heard much, and is not a reader. But he gave us correct answers, as if taught of God. He asked me, 'What more do you wish for in this world?' I replied, 'I wish for the kingdom of heaven.' He said, 'You must first seek our Lord, and then the kingdom of heaven will certainly be yours.' Again he asked, 'How will it be? I have many bad thoughts.' From this I knew that he had a contest within, like true Christians. I told him that we must resist them, and mentioned to him the words of James: 'Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.' Again: I asked him, 'What is your condition?' He said, 'My heart is wicked and defiled, but our Lord is my hope.' This brother is in the habit of teaching men much, and reproving them for their sins, both in his own neighborhood and in other places.

" May 5th.—That man of God, the native of Jeloo, has sat by our side working for the necessities of his family. He said to us, 'With my hands I am working, but my heart is ever with you. Do talk with me.' Such a man among the common people of the Nestorians we have not seen, hungry and thirsty to hear the word of God. The past

winter he had remained in the village of Memikan until this month, and he is now ready to return to his own house in Jeloo. One day he had gone to one of the villages of Gawar to sell pipes, where were many wicked men. Whenever preachers go there, they do not receive at all the gospel of life. They also last year threatened me. But this Marogen went there and spoke with them about their sin in not receiving preachers. They answered him, 'Preachers come here and remain only a little while. On this account we do not receive them. If they would come and remain a longer time, we would treat them with respect.' Once this man had gone to the church to pray alone. Some one saw him making supplication, with weeping, before God. That individual went and said to the priest, 'This Marogen is praying with tears.' The priest then asked, 'Why, Marogen, are you praying with tears?' He answered, 'Honored priest, it is necessary that prayer be made with weeping,' and he spoke other words that I cannot remember to record. If I left him and sat down by Deacon Tamo, he would go out himself and converse with Deacon Gewergis (John's travelling companion). He never became weary of the delightful instructions of the Holy Scriptures. This village of Memikan is situated on the road to Jeloo. We talked with all

Jeloo people that came there on the sinful condition of men, and this Marogen, with great zeal, helped us by his words.

“ May 19.—That godly man from Jeloo is a little deaf, and whenever we were speaking with others or with him the words of life, he would come and press down by our side, and bring his ear near to our mouth, that no word that came from our lips might be lost. He has also a disease in his body, and is bent over, so that it is very difficult for him to walk. When I went to his house in Jeloo last year, we preached to all the people we found, and wished to go to a village, the name of which is Semsikee, the village of the melik. He rose and went with us there, and said, ‘I will go with you among the villages of Jeloo and preach; I am a debtor to you.’ We said in reply, ‘Marogen, you are not our debtor in the work of preaching; you are a debtor to God.’

“ In little Jeloo (in which is Ishtazin) there are five considerable villages which have no priest or deacon. When the people die, there is no ecclesiastic to bury them, but this Marogen speaks to those who are assembled around the corpse. Deacon Tamo said to him, ‘Whenever any one dies, hire a man and send him to Gawar after me. Whenever I am there I will come.’ (For Marogen had told him there was no better time than that for preaching

to the people of Jeloo.) He said, 'If any one dies, I will hire a man and send after you, and pay the messenger myself.' The deacon replied, 'I will give it.' Then he said, 'No, I will pay it, that it may be well with me forever.' He had no trust in his good works that they would save him, or in any thing else except Christ; but he believed that if a preacher should go there and preach at a funeral, people would be awakened and repent. On this account he said that for him it would be good. We asked him, 'Marogen, how is it? Can you not be saved by your works and by your righteousness?' He answered, 'No; by Christ I shall be saved.' We then said, 'In what way? The holy virgin, the mother of our Lord, and called our Saviour, can she not save you?' He answered, 'No, our Lord is the Saviour.' We continued, 'How is it; Mar Zia, that saint and holy man, can he not save you?' Again he answered, 'No, our Lord is the Saviour.' He was always ready to learn, and to do any thing when told, which he had not before been taught. At first, when he had not found a place in the house to pray by himself, he used to pray in the presence of others. But I told him, 'It is very necessary that you find a closet for yourself seven times in the day. If more, it is better, and if there be no help for it, at least three times.' Once I went out from the village,

and found him alone in a retired place, praying. He heard the sound of my footsteps, quickly started, rose, and came to me. I asked him, 'What are you doing?' He answered, 'I have business.' I said, 'No matter, tell me.' He then replied, 'I was beseeching God. There are many great blessings that we may find, even in the mountains, by kneeling down before the throne of grace.'

"May 20.—Before going out from this village, Marogen said, 'One thing promise me, and then afterwards go. I beg you to remember me in your prayers.'"

Again, Deacon John refers to him in the journal of another tour. Under date of July 8, 1848, he says: "Another time I went to Gawar to preach, and took Khamis with me to his country and house. He (Marogen) did not let us sleep until late at night. He listened to us with much earnestness, and with tears rolling down his cheeks. We have hope that he is the light and salt of his village. He was hungry to hear us. . . . This Marogen, whenever we stopped speaking would say, 'Speak on, speak on.' With great joy he welcomed us. He asked us many deep questions. There were some men who were talking about giving presents to Mar Shimon. Marogen said, 'If Mar Shimon will exert himself to teach the law of God, we will ourselves

love him and give him all he wants.' It is evident Marogen has been taught of God."

Again, this zealous evangelist, John, makes an interesting allusion to Marogen, in his journal of a tour into the Saat mountains. He says, "Leaving Gavar, we went to Ishtazin, in Jeloo, and entered into the house of a brother whose name is Marogen, a man poor in this world's goods, but rich in faith and good works. From the depths of his poverty he treated us kindly and hospitably. He heard our words with gladness; others also assembled and listened to us attentively. We requested Marogen to find a man to conduct us to the summer encampment at Saat. It was necessary that we have a protector, because the tents of a tribe of Koords, called Ormerai, who were not perfectly subject to the Turks, were pitched on our road. But our host, although he inquired much, could not find a man to accompany us; and seeing our necessity, he said, 'For the sake of the cause of Christ, and not for money, I will go with you.' He is a man bent down with rheumatism; and we wondered when we saw that he, so infirm and crippled, was willing to go a day's journey with us."

Referring to his labors there, John says, "Some believed, and others disputed with those who were persuaded by us. There remained one very proud,

stubborn man, whose name was Sleeva, who would not be silent. Our companion, Marogen, who had remained in a village above us, came to us at this time ; and when he heard our discussion, he began to speak to Sleeva with much boldness concerning salvation by Christ, until that proud man became silent. The assembly wondered much that a poor man from Jeloo, a district less learned and less jealous for the ordinances of the church than any other among the Nestorians, could speak such words."

Again, referring to the very toilsome passage over these lofty, snowy mountains, which separate the district of Saat from Jeloo, John says, " The descent of this mountain was in many places so steep and difficult that we could not retain our foothold, and were obliged to prostrate ourselves on our backs and slide down. Our father Marogen, however, was so bent over by rheumatism that he could not lie on his back, and was obliged to slide on his side, his head resting upon his hand. Such are mountain highways."

It should be borne in mind, that up to this time Marogen had never more than once, if at all, seen the face of a missionary. He was, as we have seen, taught by the Spirit of God, during his long and grievous sickness at Tiflis, before the missionaries came to his people. Next he met a simple-hearted

Nestorian peasant in Gawar, who had returned to his mountain-home rejoicing in the ardor of first love, fresh from a precious revival at Oroomiah, and whose wondrous tale of the things he had seen and heard, found a responsive chord in Marogen's bosom. Afterward he listened occasionally to the glad tidings from the lips of native evangelists on their tours in the mountains, and thus had he grown to the stature of a man in Christ Jesus, when Messrs. Perkins and Stocking saw him for the first time at Memikan, on their return from Mosul, in the spring of 1849. Mr. Perkins makes the following brief record of him in his journal of that period. Speaking of the wild, secluded gorge where he lived, and its benighted inhabitants, he says, "There is, however, *one* good man in Ishtazin, the pious pipe-maker of Jeloo, whose name has often been mentioned in the Missionary Herald. He is a bright light in these deep, dark recesses of the Koordish mountains." And on meeting him at Memikan, June 8th, Mr. P. says: "Marogen was with us at our prayer-meeting at the house of Deacon Tamo. He is a very sensible man, and he grasps the great truths of salvation with a clear comprehension, and binds them to his heart as emphatically the treasures of eternal life. He also proclaims these truths as he has opportunity, with a good deal of ability."

The good old man rejoiced when the missionaries went to reside in Gawar, in the autumn of 1851. He came over at once to spend the winter with them, that he might "hear the precious words of God." The memory of that dear old man is ever fragrant; for he was their companion in tribulation, and did much, by his ever cheerful spirit, to relieve the solitude of that long, dreary winter. We always knew when to look for him. About four o'clock in the afternoon, when he knew we had finished our teaching, he might be seen making his way to our room, oftentimes through snow and rain and storm, his little bag of bread, which he had begged for his evening meal, slung over his arm. Well do we remember his meek face, and the warm, cordial manner with which he saluted us as he entered, saying, "Peace be with thee. How is thy health?" And in return, when asked about his health, he simply replied, "Glory to God; I only wish to know that thou art well." No one could resist the humble, imploring look with which he asked to be taught the word of God; and though he came day after day through a long winter, and though we spoke to him in a broken manner and with a stammering tongue, yet his eye never wandered, but oftentimes filled with tears, and resting

upon us with an expression so earnest, that he seemed to be drinking in with deep delight the words of life. How many were the expressions of gratitude and affection still remembered, when he rose to leave and go to his home to eat his frugal meal, and wrap himself in his coarse blanket for the night! The deep snows melted, he would return again to his valley, to dispense among his neighbors and friends the precious truths he had treasured up during the winter; for as he had freely received, so he most freely gave.

Often he was reviled; but he either blessed, or “opened not his mouth.” Insults and mockeries were oftentimes heaped upon him by his rude and wicked neighbors; and, though he was God’s only witness in all that valley, and in fact in all that wild district, we believe he proved true to the last.

The next winter he again came to our village; but it was a winter of most bitter affliction. He had been there but a short time when he was seized with rheumatism, and for five long, weary months his sufferings were severe, and oftentimes intense; but during all that time not one whisper of murmuring or discontent escaped his lips; but he would ever say, with a most meek and resigned spirit, “Glory to God; glory to God. Just as seemeth

to him good." He seemed to be ever rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer.

In the early spring of the next year, we visited the good old man in his humble home. But our hearts were saddened to find him again passing through the deep waters; but God stayed the billows, ready to sweep over him. He had already been a cripple for twenty years; and, but a few nights before, he had fallen from a roof and received an injury, which made him much more deformed and still more helpless. Though in great pain, and hardly able to move his body, he was giving glory to God in his afflictions. He was much rejoiced to see us, and we were no less glad to see him. It was very pleasant to sit by him, and bring to his mind words of consolation from God's rich stores. In the midst of his sufferings, he would sometimes break out into audible ejaculations like the following: "O Lord Jesus, thou art the King of glory—the King of kings, and Lord of lords. Thou art great and holy and merciful. I am a sinner. I am condemned. My face is black. My bones are rotten. O Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me, poor and blind and naked and miserable. O Lord Jesus, I am a sinner; I am vile. I am lost, but do thou remember me."

Whenever the missionaries or any of our native helpers visited him, he always gave them a hearty welcome, and provided for them the best entertainment his humble home could afford. How his eye beamed with delight, when, after the interval of many months, he was permitted once more to drink from the flowing fountain. We remember well, during our last visit, when he gathered his children around him, the oldest being a young man grown, and his youngest quite small, and had them repeat the Lord's prayer, in modern Syriac, which they did very well; and after all was over, with evident satisfaction, he said, "I taught them." It was that same evening that the good old man, who had a fine, melodious voice, chanted some hymns of his own composing, among which was a call to sinners to repent. The little company seemed to be deeply affected by its plaintive strains and touching appeals.

But we must come to the closing scenes in the life of this happy pilgrim. It was ever deeply interesting to think of him, a lone light in that dark region, and that he would be permitted, for many long years, to let that light shine; but his humble work was done. His mission on earth, though unpretending, yet perhaps most successful, was accomplished. He had walked close with God,

in humble faith and prayer, and now he is to go up higher, to behold, with open vision, the glories for which his fettered soul had long panted.

The day he heard of the death of our beloved brother Crane, he wept in the depth of his grief; and that same day he was taken with the illness, which, in five days, released him from all the sorrows of earth. No sympathizing Christian friend was near to watch by the couch of the dying saint, and impart consolation in that trying hour; but we believe the angels of God came down to that wild valley to watch and wait, and bear away his ransomed spirit to Abraham's bosom.

His dying words were few, simple, and touching. For several days he was speechless, even until a short time before his death, when he called his children to him, and gave them his parting counsel and his dying charge. He said, "I shall die, and you have no one left now but God. He has been my God, he will be yours also. Do not leave Him, and He will never leave you. Do not forget each morning to say the Lord's prayer, which I have taught you. Love God's servants, the missionaries. They have been kind friends to me; they will be kind to you also." With these words he fell asleep. He had often groaned in this earthly tabernacle; now mortality was swallowed up of life. Pain had

forever ceased. Sorrow was hushed into long repose; sin conquered; heaven and immortal glory won.

Peace to thy memory, blessed old man! Though unknown to fame on earth, and of a very humble calling, we believe thou hast now become a companion of angels and seraphs, and the spirits of just men made perfect. Thou art united to that goodly company of prophets and apostles and martyrs and confessors, to be united to whom thou didst often when on earth most fervently pray; and to Him who bought thee, be blessing and honor and glory and power, now and forevermore, Amen.

THE END.











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